THE TRUTH

Which God hath ſhewed unto His Servant

Richard Stafford,

WHEREIN

It is fully and Particularly Manifeſted, (to the ſeveral Orders and Degrees of Men, and under the Principal Heads of Good and Evil) That the greateſt Happineſs of this Life conſiſteth in the Fear of God and keeping his Commandments, in Oppoſition to the Pleaſures of Sin, or the ſeeming Conveniency of Diſobedience: and within each Subject of Diſcourſe there is infolded a ſuitable *Word of Exhortation.*

That all Mankind (however they are named or diſtinguiſhed into this or that Condition of Life, or Way of Worſhip) may ſee the things which belong to their Preſent Peace, and *Eternal Salvation.*

And now, Iſrael, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his wayes, and to love him, and to ſerve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his ſtatutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? Deut. 10. 12, 13.

There be many that ſay, Who will ſhew us any good? Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Pſal. 4. 6.

Let thy work appear unto thy ſervants: and thy glory unto their Children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and eſtabliſh thou the work of our hands upon us: yea, the work of our hands eſtabliſh thou it. Pſal. 90. 16, 17.

London, Printed and are to be ſold, or lent forth unto thoſe who will receive and Read it; This Book was finiſhed in the *Preſs* the laſt day of the Fifth Month 1689, and was written by me at ſeveral times before.

BIBLIOTHECA LAMBETHANA

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I Have perused the *Book of Happiness*, &c. It seems to me to be Written with a very good Intention, to promote the main Ends of Religion; and I hope with Gods Blessing it will do so: for I find nothing in it which can justly be censured as contrary to the true *Christian Faith and Practice*, or to any Doctrine of the *Church of England*, as by Law Established;

Lambeth August the 20th, 1689 } *William Needham.*

THE

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A DISCOURSE OF Happineſs, &c.

CHAP. I. *Of Happineſs in General.*

HAppineſs is the deſire and aim of all Men, and as the ſeveral good things are to be had by labour and right means, ſo this being the comprehenſion of the whole, is to be attained likewiſe. There is no accompliſhing of worldly projects and deſigns, without ſucceſſion of time and endeavour; things being as it were hidden, that they may be ſought; afar off, ſo they muſt go who will have them; and commonly future to exerciſe our diligence and expectation. Let the ſame be done immediately toward the great and principal end, as to the leſſer and ſubordinate, and none ſhall labour in vain; but the like care and conſtancy as is uſed in ordinary matters; then any perſon may be aſſured of the chiefeſt good. All other things are coveted after in order to Happineſs, though it be under the name of Pleaſure and Conveniency; there is an impatient thirſt after it from the Beginning; for beſides thoſe natural cravings after the neceſſaries of Life, Meat, Drink, Raiment; yet this is not all, there muſt be ſome delight: There is Play and Divertiſment, and then changing that from one kind to another, from Childiſh to the more Manly (though too often miſtaken) enjoyments. There is an eager inclination after ſenſual Pleaſure, and outward Mirth: As to theſe the means muſt be firſt had; Money or Eſtate which are to be gotten, and then to reap

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the Fruit of his Labours; or who hath them already, he is not to lye or ſit ſtill, but muſt riſe and go forth to gather thoſe preſent and viſible good things; ſtill this is but the Happineſs of half the Man, the Body only, and yet to be acquired ſomewhat more requires alſo a ſatisfaction. The worſt part hath its deſires and is not fed with Husks or Pebbles, but things convenient, ſufficient here is already found out, both for uſe and delight.

Now let the nature of the Soul be conſidered, according to her firſt excellency and juſt inclination, as ſhe came out of God's hand, and for what deſigned; whether there be any Objects proper for her, that they may be had alſo. Take the whole Man in conjunction, his ſpiritual part (if not choaked and ſtifled) ſeeks after Happineſs, as the other doth Health, Nouriſhment and ſenſible gratification. Whether the Soul is in growth, or puts it ſelf forth according to the capacity and increaſe of the Organs, ſhall not be curiouſly inquired; but it ſeems to partake of the Imperfection, and would come up towards Perfection. It hath an ignorance and blindneſs, which ſhould be taken away by degrees: A ſtubbornneſs and luſt through original corruption, which is to be ſubdued and regulated: It is certainly capable of bettering and improvement by right means, and ſo may arrive at Happineſs, all one as the Body doth its conveniency. The great Queſtion all along will be, what the right means are? for we are in a world of intermixture where is Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, Truth and Falſhood, Apparent and Real; and therefore muſt narrowly diſcern the one from the other. A right Knowledge carries through all, and acting according to that Knowledge. There is an eſtabliſhed and fixed nature of things pertaining to us Men; the viſible we know by ſence and experience, the inviſible by certain Reaſon and the full aſſurance of Faith. Amongſt the various and ſeemingly perplext, they may be reduced unto two general ways: That of Gods Commandment, according to his preſcribed order and uſe of them, ſhewed forth in his Word, or in diſobedience and tranſgreſſion: He made them all at firſt *very good*, Gen. 1. 31. but evil, corruption, vanity and falſhood came in; and now hath ſent his Word to inform us aright, that we may not be deceived, but ſo to uſe as not to abuſe them. It is the ſame to all Mankind, what he ſaith to that Nation, *O Iſrael thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, but in me is thy help*, Hoſ. 13. 9.

As a way is ſhewed to the things of the Fleſh, ſo of the Spirit,

rit, for Man is made up of both; he doth already know and labour after what appertains to that, let him do the ſame to the other: He is to work out his Salvation and Happineſs, (which are both the ſame thing) for God worketh in him to will and to do, who hath given Grace and Power. *If thou cryeſt after Knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for Underſtanding; if thou ſeekeſt for her as Silver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hidden Treaſure: Then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God* Pro. 2. 3, 4, 5. Thou ſhalt learn his Kingdom and Dominion over us Creatures, and acknowledge as moſt due our own obedience and ſubjection; thou ſhalt fully apprehend the things pertaining to it, and what is contrary, or an hindrance. To him that perfectly knoweth what are the right and true means to Happineſs, the attainment is eaſie. To ſeparate the precious from the vile; to lay hold of the real good from meer appearances, to find out ſomething more then this World gives, (for which we are beholden unto Gods Revelation in Scripture) to obtain the ſure hope and expectation of good things to come. If a way is pointed out how any one may be happy, if he is endued with Power to go therein, for he may underſtand, and he may do; I think more cannot be deſired, unleſs he is forced unto it, which none is: Bnt all are prompted with the ſame inclination as to eat when hungry. Indeed the ſpiritual part can be longer in ſuſpence without true Happineſs, then the Body its Nonriſhment; for it is a more excellent and enduring ſubſtance, yet it deſires that as much as the other being and ſupport.

If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf; but if thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear it, Pro. 9. 12. If thou wouldſt learn to refer all things to Gods Glory, and under that to thy own Happineſs. Examine every days Actions how they promote this end. What am I the happier for having had or done this? ſuch things paſs away and fail, be thou for what endures and grows up. Renounce what is ſeemingly delectable and fancy, and endeavour after real Goodneſs and Wiſdom. If the true Chriſtian may be manifeſted to be more happy in his manner of Life, than the natural ungodly Man with all his ſinful Pleaſures and Profits; who is ſincere making the Scripture the Rule of his Actions, if he may be found more bleſſed then outward Profeſſors, or thoſe who keep ſome of the Commandments of God, and neglect others under the falſe pretence of more Happineſs and conve-

niency. If it can be made evident that to have *reſpect unto*
Pſ. 119. 6. *them all* is Peace, how the leaſt Varietation is diſquiet and miſery, and a greater loſs then the ſuppoſed benefit; This is directly to oppoſe the Enemy of Gods Kingdom and Mans Happineſs, and *to take from him all his Armour wherein he truſts*, Luk. 11. 22. for the Bait of every Temptation is Pleaſure, Conveniency and Advantage; now Happineſs is more then all theſe, and there ſucceeds in the room of the other, Truth and real Gain, Peace and future Glory. The World need not be angry, but ſhould rather pray for good Luck in this undertaking, in that it is only pleaded for to which they are ſtrictly required by gracious Promiſes and ſevere Threatnings. God is above and greater then Man, and therefore it is no fault to ſpeak for his Government. And there are in our ſelves earneſt Longings after Satisfaction, *give it me or elſe I die*, ſo we are to be acquainted throughly that it is in God only. Amongſt all thoſe Diviſions and Opinions concerning Happineſs (wherein thoſe of Old were ſo puzled) one is to be fixed upon true and certain; after a diligent ſearch through the whole Creation, and ſo often returned all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, the Concluſion of the whole matter is here to be more particularly ſurveyed, *Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole Duty of Man, Eccleſ.* 12, 13. *His greateſt Happineſs even in this life doth conſiſt herein.* This Propoſition by Gods aſſiſtance which I do humbly and earneſtly implore (*O ſend out thy Light and thy*
Pſ. 43. 3. *Truth, let them lead me*) I ſhall endeavour to manifeſt; the general Opinion of mankind is againſt this, they will own as much with their lips outwardly, but contradict it by their own Actions: But yet Truth if cleared and brought forth, will prevail with unprejudiced, unbyaſſed minds. If any are not ſo, it is through luſt, intereſt or humour, which they think as ſome helps towards Happineſs, and therefore if they ſhould hinder the impartial inquiry after that, it is to be hoped they may be laid aſide. The utmoſt Happineſs of this World is to be free from as many Evils as poſſible, and to enjoy as much good as may be had in this ſtate of Humiliation and Imperfection.

God would not have any Man to be perfectly and abſolutely Happy as to this preſent time. Himſelf alone is *the Bleſſed*, Mark 4. 61. He is the Fountain of all Happineſs, and reſerves

for

for thoſe to be Partakers thereof who ſhall be found worthy. The deſign of the following Diſcourſes, is, that we may prepare and make ſure of that above all things, and to paſs through here with more Comfort and fewer Evils then uſually Men do; But ſincere, compleat, and uninterrupted Happineſs is not to be expected in this Earth, for it would take off our deſire from God and his Kingdom, and alſo we could not bear it according to the Capacity we are now in. There is to be ſeen by his wiſe providential ordering, a Succeſſion and mixture of Good and Evil, ſweet and bitter, and we have all things in an imperfect manner. But Man either not knowing or wilful going contrary to this deſign of Almighty God would fain be truly Happy, and that preſently; with which Temptation the Devil prevails over him to revolt from God and break his Commandments, ſuggeſting a full Satisfaction may be had when it is ordained otherwiſe. As it always proves a miſtake, ſo moſt commonly the Perſon not recovering from it when he comes to know as much, it proves deſtructive and miſerable to him. Did he but patiently wait and ſtand ſtill, he might ſee the Salvation of God. The Lord doth deſign the Happineſs of his Creatures, and why are they not contented he ſhould go his own way in bringing to paſs his gracious Work? At firſt he made us without our ſelves, and now he would make us Happy with our ſelves, if we would not run before, but *follow hard after him*, Pſ. 63. 8. in the way he ſhews. Would we endure a little Travel before we come to Reſt, not miſtake in the Place, but hearken unto and obey what our God ſaith, *Ariſe ye, depart for this is not your Reſt*, Mic. 2 20. Leave of that purſuit and fixing on temporal Happineſs, and ſeek for that which is to come. Every thing puts in mind of our imperfection which is in order to perfection, ſo we are to move towards it, but not run out catching after what is not to be had. Our mortality ſhould teach us to breath after immortality, and the natural reſult is not to rear up a dwelling place as if we were to abide here forever, or to be lifted up with Proſperity as if we ſhould never be moved, but to look out for the eternal Manſion, and that Kingdom which cannot be ſhaken. What ever we meet with is mixt and unſatisfactory, we again deſire what is not ſo, this ſhould put us upon ſeeking after thoſe pure and ſatisfying Pleaſures above. The things we ſee, handle and taſte are fitted for the Conveniency of our vile and dying Bodies, which they like

like well enough; but this prompts to go in the way for them to be made glorious and incorruptible. The Soul finds every thing empty and ſhort, whereupon ſhe pants after a proper fulneſs, which is only in the Fruition of the Godhead, with whom we would be eternally tranſported. Here is the miſchief and danger, all outward Pleaſures if moderately uſed are diverſions, but if too much, they quite turn aſide out of the way. Even the diverſions do mightily hinder; ſo that were the Man contented to go on and uſe them no more then needs muſt, he would infallibly arrive at the Bleſſed end: Paſs through this World in a conſtant ſmooth Temper: Chooſing rather to ſpend his time in the Peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs, then in the Clamorous but troubleſome Delights of Sin and Vanity; let his days fly over his Head in doing real Good, then ſnatching at what the World eſteems good things; continually make Proviſion againſt the time to come, and not to laviſh away the preſent in idle unſatisfying Mirth; remember the great and higher ends of Life, then barely to eat and drink well, or taſte Pleaſure. Not to antedate his Happineſs expecting it perfect and enduring, which is to be ſo hereafter. And finally to ſpie out and avoid the deceitful appearances of it now, and to do whatever Conſcience and Reaſon dictates is to be done to ſecure unto himſelf immortality and Glory. Reſt is not to be had in tranſitory things, not Peace in a troubleſome World. Neither can earthly things ſatisfie Heaven born Souls, *He that loveth Silver will not be ſatisfied with Silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increaſe*, Eccleſ. 5. 10. And he who loveth Pleaſure may be ſurfeited, but never filled.

Were Men really perſwaded, that theſe things are ſo, they would be freed from much trouble and diſappointment, for they deceive themſelves with vain Expectations and tormenting Deſires. By raiſing ſuch a conceit of Happineſs they pine long for want thereof, and when had are diſcontented as before. Whilſt in purſuit they flatter themſelves with abundance of Satisfaction, but after they are obtained with much Labour and Care, they prove to be empty Deluſions, and Clouds without water. If we could be made ſufficiently ſenſible of the Vanity of the Creature, and throughly know the nature of things, we ſhould not look for more Contentment then they really yield, nor render our ſelves miſerable by being often deceived. We ſhould ſet our affections on thoſe things above, if we did verily think nothing would ſatisfie them

them here below. *The Lord ſtretcheth forth the Heavens, and layeth the Foundation of the Earth, and formeth the Spirit of Man within him*, Zach. 12. 1. Which is of ſuch a refined and immortal Nature, that nothing can content but what is of the ſame quality and continuance with it ſelf. Had we brutiſh Souls, were the whole ſo as ſome little inclinations, then indeed we ſhould be ſo pleaſed with ſenſual Delights that it would be good for us to be here. But think upon them even in the jollity and vigour of Youth, which is led on for want of full knowledge expecting more ſtill, and if they tranſport, it is but the Pleaſure of a Beaſt without Reaſon and Reflection, for that ſuggeſts ſomewhat is wanting ſtill. The Soul (if ſuffered to have its natural tendency and power) would find out where only it is to be had. But there is a ſecret unſeen Enemy who uſes all Arts and Devices to keep off from this. One would admire at his exceeding ſubtilty in deceiving mankind as he doth in this thing. It is ſtrongly ingrafted into all minds, that they are not only willing, but do actually endeavour to be as Happy as they can, yet many miſs of being ſo. Even reaſonable Creatures, who know and have Power to chooſe the Good and refuſe the Evil, and uſe ſo much induſtry in purſuit thereof, yet are deceived. There are many falſe Opinions concerning Happineſs, which are received without full Examination, when there is but one true. The old Proverb as many men as many minds, is never more verified then on this Object and the means neceſſary to it. Every ſingle Perſon doth chooſe a ſeveral path, having Fancies and Thoughts of his own by which he Acts. And though ſingularity is abhorred in Religion (the only way thereof) yet here 'tis affected by all: Every one would be Happy, but go his own way, which indeed are turnings out of the way, ſtanding ſtill, and going backwards. There are many who with the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* take up their Reſt on this ſide *Jordan*, ſo they only are to be blamed, if they come not into the pleaſant Land. Others advance a little further, but through prejudice or Self-will refuſe to know and follow all directions that are neceſſary, ſo they err and wander but do not arrive at it. Others will not hear any thing thereof, ſo they cannot deſire. And thus ſome being careleſs and negligent; ſome partial, blind and ſtubborn, others ignorant and unbelieving, it comes to paſs that the true Road to Happineſs hath ſo few Travellers. It is moſt to be admired of thoſe who journey not at all,

all, when they evidently know how they are in Tents of flesh which cannot possibly continue. Why should it seem strange and incredible that God would raise them up in another place after they are removed hence whereof we are so much told? When he hath already brought us into this World without our Consent, and we heard nothing of it before, or if that was impossible, yet we are assured that Children will be born and of the future Generations, though he makes no such particular discovery to us of that, as of our own future Condition. Besides divine Testimony, the Cloud of Witnesses, there is a desire and firm assurance within, that we shall remain forever; there is an earnest Expectation and Coveting after more then is to be seen or had here, an insatiable thirst after Happiness puts us upon doing those things, which intitle unto and make meet for a blessed Eternity, so strongly hath God fenced up our way to bring us to himself.

All the Sons and Daughters of Men do groan within themselves; those many and different Actions of the World are to this end; none grudges any toil or pain for to have it, Who refuses to do any thing to be Happy? Let it be what it will, he seems contented; for this do I Labour and Sweat and run and can never do too much but all in vain. Shew us any way and we will follow it. Sayest thou this O Man? Wilt thou stand to thy word, and not go away sorrowful at the saying, when thou art told how thou mayst be Happy? Wilt thou then look up unto God? *Acquaint thy self with him and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee*, Job 22. 21. That word imports a full knowledge of him and his ways. Do'st thou think knowledge was given thee in vain? Wilt thou exercise that, and let it go before thy Actions? Upon assurance thou will diligently use and seek to advance it; then prove all things, hold fast to that which is good, thus doing thou must be Happy. If thou do'st prove all things, thou must prove the things pertaining to Gods Kingdom; and not pass slightly over them as the manner of the World is; who dwell amongst the Pots, run from one Evil to another, from this sinful Pleasure or Profit, to such an Humour, Fancy or vain Opinion, and have not to do with what is Good, Truth and Reason. These finding nothing but Trouble and Discontent, Emptiness and Vanity lie down and sink down under the Wretched (and as they think remediless) Condition of mankind. Whereas they walk up and down in the Earth, a place of Misery and Vexation,

vexation, ſeek reſt and find none; but do not lift up their Heart to God in the Heavens, from whom alone is to be had all true delight and ſatisfaction. They follow after falſe diſquieting things, not minding the true Peace provided for the Soul. One would think thoſe miſtakes and deceits every where, ſhould drive them ſooner to this ſure Refuge, yet alas! ſuch Strangers are we naturally to God, that we are apt to ſeek help of every thing before of him; and if after all nothing is to be had, then we flee unto him as a reſerve and laſt reſort; hereby intimating, if we could be aſſiſted any other way, we had never came unto him. What baſe unworthineſs is in our nature? that ſhould deal ſo with our Maker, who is the Author of all things, even of thoſe we ſeek for ſuccour. God knows our Ignorance, delighteth in Mercy, and is pleaſed to admit thereof. But here is the failure again, that ſome do not turn to the Lord their God, nor are obedient to his voice. They take Religion juſt for a preſent eaſe, which if it doth not give forthwith, they become impatient, raſhly and falſly concluding there is no good to be found in it; Every thing before they tryed to the utmoſt, but of this they do not make a full Experiment. They would be contented in reference to other matters to part with any thing, or to wait any time ſo they may find good; but will not turn from every evil way, nor tarry the Lords leiſure, and ſo they go away without benefit.

Could we be aſſured the things of God are for our Happineſs, we would be for them; which they are, or nothing in the World is. And it may appear they are equally for the good of the inward Man, as other things to the outward. All beſides may be diſproved and found inſufficient to quiet our reſtleſs and craving part. The wiſe *Gentiles* did come ſo far as to conſtitute the chiefeſt good in the practice of moral vertue, then which nothing did conduce more to the Peace and Tranquility of the mind. They did grope by the Wall-ſide of true Religion, but were not within; They did give atteſtation to the excellency of God's Ways, though they did not know him; all one as a reflex beam of light may through a crevis paſs into a low Dungeon without ever ſeeing the Sun. By how much the nearer the approach is to the right end, there is ſomewhat more reſt, then what was wholly beſides. A full draught of water doth quench the thirſt, when dipping the finger therein, will only cool the Tongue;

however, that is better then to thurſt earth, or what is of a contrary nature into the Mouth. The diſcerning *Heathens* could know that outward ſenſible things did not make up the greateſt Happineſs of this Life. That is ſituate within a Mans breaſt, and the rational part cannot ſubſiſt with meer conceits, but requires ſomething proportionable to her nature.

It concerns every one what thoughts he hath within himſelf, and if he would act ſincerely for his own good, he ſhould firſt ſtrictly debate whether they be true or falſe; for if they ſhould prove wrong, he loſes all his foregoing labour, which might have been ſpent in obtaining a real good; and on the contrary becomes miſerable by a diſappointment. The general courſe of Mens doings, do turn upon one principal point; there being but one time of tryal, one main good or evil ſet before them, to which all the leſſer and ſingle acts do relate. There is one God over all, one rule of action in his Word, one end of everlaſting Happineſs or Miſery. And the ſeveral deeds done in the Body, are as ſo many ſteps to one or the other. The Law and the Teſtimony, and the Light in them, diſcovers the nature of all how many ſoever they be, and to what they lead. So again, when one is in any Miſery or Trouble he ſhould take heed how he ſeeks for eaſe and recovery, for otherwiſe the laſt error may be worſe then the firſt, and he may become more miſerable by what he thought would be a Cure and Remedy. Let him look and find out the cauſe. Have recourſe unto the lively Oracles, when he is in ſorrow and diſcompoſure of mind. Whether himſelf be not of the number of thoſe who are *Like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe Waters caſt up mire and dirt*, Iſa. 57. 20. And there his melancholy (as they call it) is the neceſſary effect of Sin and Guilt. Their Conſciences being wounded, they run up and down ſeeking a little Comfort, when they carry ſtill that along with them; they go from one place to another, here and there, and yet are not ſatisfied. By this means the deadly thing is not taken away, but ſticks ſtill faſt t il it rankles and becomes inſenſate, ſo more dangerous. Some being hardened through the deceitfulneſs of Sin are not ſenſible; how this occaſions preſent dulneſs or diſquiet, but impute it to natural diſpoſition, and faſtly imagine to have a Cure by what was the original cauſe thereof: Theſe acting contrary to Reaſon, meet with the uſual event of Folly. The pleaſures of

Sin

in are but for a ſeaſon, and after the ſeveral times are over; the melancholick fit returns as bad, rather worſe then ever. If they would ſuffer themſelves to be admoniſhed, how they neither make uſe of the right remedy, nor apply it to the diſtempered part; for inſtead of taking away they feed the Diſeaſe, and uſe ſtupifying Medicines, which only take away the Sence but not prevent Death. The Sinner that labours under remorſe, will drink heartily, for Sorrow is dry, ſo endeavouring to drown the Spirit within him, which though it ſink at night, will riſe again in the morning, and becauſe it tells him the Truth, it is thought his Enemy for diſturbing him; And therefore he will try again to drive that unwelcome Gueſt out of his Houſe, which cannot be done. Then continual Buſineſs, Recreation or Company ſhall divert its whiſpers: Otherwiſe by groſs Ignorance or ſtupid inconſideration he willingly becomes as bruit Beaſts, whom he obſerves to be diſturbed from nothing within. Thus he dreams of Relief, as if he ſhould not die, and puts off what would do no other harm then lead him to Repentance, till it is hid from his Eyes.

It is truly ſaid of the Wiſdom that is from above, *Her ways are ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all her pathes are Peace*, Pro. 3. 17. Under that Word is comprized all Happineſs, and this throughout the whole Scripture is promiſed to keeping of the Commandments of God. *O that thou had hearkened to my Commandment, then had thy Peace been as a River, and thy Righteouſneſs as the Waves of the Sea*, Iſa. 48. 18. There is a conſtant ſerenity and calmneſs of mind. The ſincere Penitent when he is habituated to the way of Godlineſs, finds more Pleaſure then ever he did in the courſe of Sin. He is more comforted in ſinging Praiſes, and making ſpiritual Melody in his Heart, then heretofore in drunken Songs, or lacivious Tunes. More ſatisfaction ariſes to him in meditating on God's Law, then who deviſe miſchief, or let their thoughts run after all manner of filthineſs. This is the conſtant felicity of God's choſen, but they have greater things then theſe; the antepaſts of Heaven, the earneſt and firſt fruits of the Spirit, that joy of the inward Man which far exceeds the moſt exquiſite delights of Sence. All theſe are without allay or mixture, there is no Condemnation or Fear, no Repentance or Vexation among them. It is a true and ſenſible ſatisfaction, though it may ſeem myſtery and fooliſhneſs to

carnal Men. Any one may have it upon the terms of the Gospel, who obſerves all things whatſoever the Author thereof hath commanded, for want of which ſo many miſs of it. The Covetous doth avoid Gluttony, Drunkenneſs or ſuch chargeable Sins, and will be apt to cry out with the *Phariſee*, *God be thanked I am none of theſe*; *But he doth not take heed and beware of Covetouſneſs*, Luke 12. 15. ſo he is not Happy here, *For through the love of Money he pierceth himſelf through with many Sorrows, nor will be hereafter, for ſuch ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 10. He whoſe God is his Belly, is perhaps no Mans enemy but his own, and therefore may expect the peaceable fruits of Righteouſneſs, but in vain, for he hath not here any laſting joy; it ariſes only from the Meat and Drink that periſheth; neither will he attain to the fulneſs thereof, *His end being Deſtruction from the preſence of God*, Phil. 3. 18. They do ſomewhat towards obtaining Happineſs, but the other evil deprives thereof. One accurſed thing troubles *Iſrael* here below, and ſhall never approach ſo near as to diſturb the reſt of the People of God. However the enemies to their own good would have it, yet it is neceſſary to that of the preſent time to avoid every evil way, for otherwiſe there can be no true Peace of mind, no freedom from Fear and Regret.

In the day of Proſperity be joyful, but in the time of Adverſity conſider: God alſo hath ſet the one over againſt the other, to the end that Man ſhould find nothing after him, Eccleſ. 7. 14. Look into them both throughly, and they are little, each paſſeth away, and it is the ſame thing afterwards. So they are not to be admired or feared, but the one cautiouſly uſed, and the other ſubmitted unto, that they may help forward to eternal Happineſs; for that is Happineſs indeed, and the principal concern; when all temporal things ſlip away like a Dream, which affects a little for the inſtant, but afterwards is not minded. But good Men can better bear affliction then others, having joy and gladneſs within, when the Body is weak and languiſhing. They have quietneſs and aſſurance of mind, when the Fleſh is waſted with Pain or Sickneſs. This is ſo manifeſt, that even the Wicked (if they have courage to ſtand by and obſerve) will ſecretly ejaculate, Let me die ſuch a Death, and let my latter end be like his; *Mark the Perfect Man, and behold the Upright, for the end of that Man is Peace*, Pſal. 37. 37. When others are attended

ded with Horror, Amazement, or Stupidity and Inconsideration.

All acknowledge those more happy in their Sickness and Death; but the great doubt and inquiry will be, whether they are so in their Life; for if that can be brought forth and made to appear in the Light of the Living, it would be no small argument for the Conversion of Sinners from the error of their way. The reason why they follow after the Lusts of the Flesh, and commit Sins most in Fashion, is because they think it is for their present Happiness, their Honour and Reputation which is one part thereof. Now were they fully convinced, that could equally, yea more be had in obedience to Gods Commandment, these would live according to that, unless they are the greatest Fools that can be imagined, considering the disproportion of the rewards of the one, and sad punishments that are to the other way. If the God of this World hath not blinded their Eyes, and they are not altogether become Carnal who cannot discover any thing within, they may consider the great difference of things set before us, Life and Good, Death and Evil, that they may choose the better and avoid the worse. Evil hath a thin appearance of Good, and therefore is catched at and embraced; so Good hath an outward shew of Evil, and is abhorred and despised. At first sight Sin and Iniquity seem to further the Happiness of mankind, but in truth is the cause of Misery; so Righteousness and Obedience looked slightly on, appear to bring Inconvenience and Disturbance. Sin hath a shew of Wisdom and Briskness, when in the Act it is Folly, afterwards Tribulation and Anguish of Soul; the other at a transitory glance is foolish and dull, but upon full Tryal is the greatest Prudence, perfect Peace and Satisfaction to the mind of Man. The delusion and mistake is, Men do not see throughly into things, nor look beyond the present unto the end, and consequent of them; for if they did this, they would not be deceived in that greatest Concern (for every Soul would have the one and escape the other) of Happiness or Misery. *Judge not according to Appearance but righteouss Judgment.* That excessive Laughter and outward Noise (which sometimes accompany the Pleasures of Sin) make ignorant undiscerning Persons stand in Admiration of it. But is it not all like crackling of Thorns under a Pot, which gives a blaze, but no solid heat, and is suddenly extinct? *Ye which rejoyce in a thing of naught,*

Amos

Amos 6.13. Is not your heart even in the midſt thereof ſorrowful? How many Damps and unheard Sighs are perceived from within by your ſelves amongſt merry Company? Are you not more penſive afterwards? When you are alone (if you can endure that) and reflect the next morning; are they not all vaniſhed away as laſt nights Dream? What odds between that and yeſterdays Enjoyments? Is this your utmoſt Happineſs that is mixt, broken off, and interrupted? Which day by day grows more tireſome, and ceaſes to delight. A whole Life ſo ſpent, as between the laſt riſing of the Sun and ſetting thereof, doth not ſatisfie at the inſtant, utterly periſhes, and ſeems as if it had never been; thoſe Delights are not greateſt that make moſt noiſe, but rather ſhallow and haſtily run away, when true Satisfaction like deep Water is ſilent and full.

We may indeed ſhew forth outward Signs of Rejoycing, for wherefore hath God given us Powers ſo to do, if we might not Laugh? *He that doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the Children of Men*, (I am perſwaded) doth not delight to ſee a ſad Countenance, diſfigured Faces, or a Head hanging down like a Bulruſh, but Loves a cheerful Aſpect as well as a Giver. We may be Chriſtians and Men ſtill. Both merry and facetious as far as conſiſtent with the perfect Law of Liberty. We may uſe the Creatures and Recreations in a moderate way, and ſo they relliſh more then running to the full Exceſs of Riot. In the mean while we do not place our Happineſs in them. We eſteem them as Bleſſings, and are thankful, but do not reſt contented being deſigned for greater things, we do not uſe them as the chiefeſt Good, nor conſume moſt of our time and care in them, as the manner of ſome is: Who therefore term us Melancholly and Stupid, but themſelves are more properly Brutiſh. Why ſhould they accuſe any one for not being exceeding Cheerful in thoſe things which cannot make the Owners ſo? That Aſpertion is generally caſt upon all Gods Servants, as if his Ways were nothing but Sowreneſs and Miſery, and ſo diſcourage others. It is unworthy to bring an evil Report of the Land they never ſearched, their words are not much minded who ſpeak evil of the things they know not. But it is much worſe in the Spies, who ſay they have knowledge and experience, if they do leſſen it in a whiſpering and indirect manner; it is becauſe themſelves did ſlightly view, and ſo away; they had a ſecret Prejudice before,

and

and it came in as it were by force, and for their own ſafety. But had they went through, and into the midſt of it, diligently obſerved all things, dwelt there for ſome time, the longer the better, they will perceive the Goodneſs thereof. By that time they have continued as long there as in the Wilderneſs of Sin, they will like it much more; ſomewhat is to be allowed to a ſtate of Tryal, conſequently Temptations; an imperfect knowledge, thoſe remainders of Original corruption, which are ſo many weights that we muſt carry along in the Chriſtian race, but ſtill by Gods aid we can go through here with more Contentment then others in their ways. *But ſeek ye firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you*, Mat. 6. 33. Such Proviſions and Accomodations as are neceſſary for your Journey; if you have them not in ſo great abundance, yet you ſhall in a more excellent way; your Life is more ſweet and comfortable, then thoſe who have Riches or Eſtate. The Apoſtle ranks thoſe among the *Enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt who mind Earthly things*, Phil. 3. 18, 19. and therefore 'tis improper to inſiſt upon Conſiderations drawn from them, unleſs they lead up towards the Heavenly.

The knowledge of God and Eternity make all things beſides ſeem little and momentary, for the greater will obſcure the leſs, as the Sun doth the Light of the Moon and Stars. Now becauſe moſt ſay with their mouths God is their chiefeſt good, Heaven their end, when their Heart runs after temporal things; unleſs his Word did diſcover it in plain and true Sayings, we ſhould be at a loſs how to find out their Hypocriſie, or put a difference between making them the principal or ſubordinate end. Where is ſuch a cumbring about many things, and ſo little or lazy regard to the one thing needful; That earneſt care and greater degree of affection after one then the other, will manifeſt their Pretences to be lying and vain; for it is a certain Rule, Where is Faith and Love of God, that Man will not commit Sin, or leave Duty undone, to accompliſh preſent things. And if he did ſincerely intend for Heaven, he would not do thoſe things which lead contrary, as that Word (which makes known the place and way) doth expreſly declare. Men would not be ſo mightily concerned for a moment (no more then they are for one Nights Lodging upon a Journey) if they had a real Senſe of Eternity. If it was not for this great end, all Mens doings are vain: their

Diver-

Divertiſments would be as the flyings of a Swallow, during its appointed time; their heavineſs and miſery as the Mournings of a Dove, which would be ended. Whatever delights or afflicts, ſoon paſſeth away, and we are gone. To talk of their Good and Evil would be as impertinent, as now it is to lay down Rules for having the tickling of a Feather, or prevent the ſcratchings of a Pin. Their goings up and down would be as the moving of a ſhadow which is loſt in darkneſs. The deep thoughts of Heart dreams followed with a dead and eternal Sleep: Great ſwelling words like a voice crying in the Wilderneſs inſtantly periſh, and ſignifie nothing. Thoſe fancied worthy and great Actions juſt carry on that ſmall Variety which is in the courſe of the World, but little more then what Beaſts do in their ſeveral kinds, all things would be ſmall and inconſiderable in this Life of Vanity, barely appear and be forgotten. If there was an utter end and no more, it would be an idle (as it is now unacceptable) Office to uſe any words about them.

But ſeeing the Caſe is otherwiſe, there is a God that judgeth in the Earth, *Pſal.* 58. 11. He hath given a Law to thoſe ſeveral Generations that paſs through here to govern them by. All thoſe things which ſeem to be vaniſhed and gone by, will riſe up again, for we muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to what he hath done whether it be good or bad, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. We are only Proved here how we will behave our ſelves towards God. It is worth while to look further, to conſider Man in his ſeveral Circumſtances, State and Condition in this world, with ſome general Heads of Good and Eivil that are ſet before him, if he may be ſtirred up or put in mind of ſome things for his own Happineſs and Safety.

CHA.

CHAP. II.

Of Man conſidered in his threefold Condition, Original, Corrupted and Reſtored: Of his Thoughts Words and Actions, Infancy, Youth, Manhood, therein of Company and Marriage; Of Old Age, Body, Senſes and ſenſual Pleaſure; Of the Soul, Underſtanding, Will, Affections, as Love, Fear, Joy, Sorrow, Anger, Hope: Of Temptations; The Cloſe.

THou haſt made Man a little lower then the Angels, and haſt Crowned him with Glory and Honour, Pſal. 8.5. One part is of the duſt of the ground, the other the breath of Life, a reaſonable Soul, in which he hath reſemblance to the angelical Nature, and is exalted above Beaſts.

His Happineſs in the ſtate of Innocency, and how it was loſt by Tranſgreſſion is known by every one that reads the Scripture, again he was redeemed by our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 5. 17, 18, 19. 1 *Pet.* 3.18. If we are not wanting to our ſelves, he hath reſtored us to as great a Capacity of good, as we ſhould have had if our Fore-father had not ſinned.

God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only Son, that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life, John 3.16. *Hereby perceive we the Love of God towards us, becauſe he laid down his Life for us, and greater love then this hath no Man then to lay down his Life for another,* 1 John 3.10. The holy Spirit inſpires Grace and good Motions into our hearts, whom if we do not reſiſt, and ſo grieve, he will Seal us to the day of Redemption.

We feel the miſchievous workings of Original Corruption, and we have the ſame quality of our firſt Parent to Luſt after forbidden things. A coveting after Evil, and averſeneſs to Good. *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my Mother conceive me*, Pſal. 51.5. It is intermixed and grows up with every part, that we all are as prone to Evil, as the Sparks to fly upward: Indeed goodneſs doth appear reaſonable and lovely, yet our Inclinations are backwards to the Practiſe of it, there is a Cloſe hankering after and Preference of the contrary. The whole Man is defiled, *Mark* 7.21, 22, 23. *Gen.*8.21. *Eccl* 3.9. He deviſeth iniquity in his Bed, he ſtudies to do miſchief, His Thoughts are vain, He takes no delight in Good, but rather on Luſt, Pride, and all manner of Concupiſence. *Every mouth ſpeaketh folly*, Iſa. 9.17. Evil Communications, Filthineſs, Deceit, Lying, and all ſorts of Evil proceed out of it. With Blaſphemies and horrid Oaths he is diſhonoured who enabled it to Speak. With this Sword it is endeavoured to give our bleſſed Redeemer more Wounds, and to crucifie him afreſh. *The tongue is a fire, a World of iniquity; ſo is the tongue amongſt our Members, that it defileth the whole Body, and ſetteth on fire the courſe of Nature, and is ſet on fire of Hell. Therewith bleſs we God, even the Father, and therewith curſe we Men, which are made after the ſimilitude of God*, Jam. 3.6, 9. Our Actions proceeding from the ſame corrupt Stock are of the like Nature; Wiſe to do evil, and forward to put in Execution what our wicked hearts conceive.

Every Member is wicked, and abominably wicked. Their inward part is very wickedneſs, *Pſal.* 5.9. and as it is further deſcribed, *Rom* 3.10 to *ver.* 18. Man is become as ſinful as is poſſible for ſuch a poor Creature to be with ſhort Faculties and Powers; they are ſtretched forth to the utmoſt, he ſins till he hath not Ability to ſin any more; though he hath not wherewithal to vent, yet the malicious and corrupt Deſire is infinite in a little finite Being. The Seeds of Evil came in with the forbidden Fruit. But we muſt not accuſe *Adam* of our Tranſgreſſion more then is due, for it is our own fault if we ſuffer it to grow forth and improve it to that monſtrous height. It may be hewn down and deſtroyed, but ſtill the ſtump of the Roots is left in the Earth. The holy One that came down from Heaven hath got this Priviledge and Power for us. The Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſins of the World, could even

Dan. 4. 23.

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at this preſent time extirpate it quite Root and Branch; but that he is not pleaſed to do for wiſe Reaſons, yet now he puteth in ſuch a Condition and Ability to perform ſo much as in and through him will be accepted; and we ſhall come to that place where this accurſed thing with all its remainders ſhall utterly be done away. If we come unto him, and ſincerely do what is required under the ſecond Covenant, Chriſts righteouſneſs will ſupply our defects. *The filthy Rags*, Iſa. 64. 6. ſhall be caſt away, and we ſhall be arrayed *in fine Linnen clean and White: For the Fine Linnen is the Righteouſneſs of Saints*, Rev. 21.8.

What then, ſhall we continue in ſin that Grace may abound? God forbid. Thoſe which make this damnable inference, do miſtake the Goſpel Covenant, which requires obedience and good Works, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12, 13. 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. *Heb.* 5. 9. *Chriſt hath brought good tidings and publiſhed Peace, and brought good tidings of good, and publiſhed Salvation*, Iſa. 52.7. The ſame Jeſus hath ſaid, Thoſe which do iniquity ſhall be caſt into a Furnace of fire, *Mat.* 13. 41, 42. *Luk.* 13. 27, 28. He hath proclaimed the acceptable Year of the Lord, and the Day of vengeance of our God, *Iſa.* 61. 2. The Goſpel is commonly ſaid to be all mercy, yet therein the wrath of God is revealed againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of Men, *Rom.* 1. 18. ſo 2 *Theſ.* 1.7, 8, 9. The end of both Law and Goſpel is obedience, by this we are freed from the Curſe, *Gal.* 3.10,13. We have further the aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit to reſiſt Temptations and keep Gods Commandments. The ſtony Heart is taken away, and an Heart of fleſh is given. Whereas the whole Man is corrupted, now he is put into a way to be right again, if he will uſe the Grace given him. He may run counter to his natural State, and be ſanctified throughout. A good Man out of the good Treaſure of the Heart bringeth forth good things, *Mat.* 12. 35. After thoſe days ſaith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their Hearts, *Jer.* 31. 33. So we may draw near with a true Heart in full aſſurance of Faith, having our Hearts ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience, and our Bodies waſhed with pure water, *Heb.* 10. 22. Sanctifie the Lord God in your Hearts, 1 *Pet.* 3.15. Caſting down imagintaions and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought to the obedience of

Christ, 2 *Cor.* 10.5. Excellent Subject matter is laid down for them, *Phil.* 4.8. There is God and his Law to be meditated on, Creation, Redemption, Providence, the knowledge of our selves. There is a large Field for Thoughts to range in, and the Soul is continually sending some forth. We are to cherish the good, and cast the bad away. It hath been said, Thoughts are free; every Man may have what he will to himself in the deep of his Heart, not throughly considering with whom we have to do, a God who searches the Heart and tryeth the Reins, who hath commanded, *Wash thine Heart from wickedness, that thou mayst be saved; how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. 4.14. And in these latter days hath spoken by his Son, *Blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God*, Mat. 5.8.

Of Speech. The principal use of Speech is, that *We may offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our Lips, giving thanks to his Name*, Heb. 13.15. and then it is necessary to maintain Society, to Communicate our thoughts to each other, that we may be helpful and beneficial (for none is sufficient of himself) either in spiritual or temporal things. God hath ordained that we should stand in need, that we may be kind and serviceable to one another. This is the end of Conversation and Neighbourhood, so of Speech, without which we should not differ from the Flock or Herd. We are to do all the good we can by mutual Admonition and Counsel, both to give and receive, and Practice it severally. Put them in mind to speak evil of no Man, to be no Brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all Men, *Tit.* 3.2. Wherefore putting away Lying, speak every Man truth with his Neighbour, for we are Members one of another, *Eph* 4.25. Nothing is so contrary to the design of Speech as that, for this pretends to discover our thoughts when we do not, and thus deceive them. Truth is the image of God stampt upon the Soul, which Lying is a direct Violation of, and severely threatned, *Rev.* 21.8. The caution our Saviour and his Apostle gives, *Mat.* 5.37. *Jam.* 5.12 is to hinder that wicked Prevarication of the first use of Speech afore-mentioned; it is contrary to praising of God, which makes his great and dreadful Name vile and cheap, by vainly using it upon little and trivial Matters. These are the slips of the Tongue we are obliged to beware of. The positive Duties thereof are to speak out for Gods Glory, and the benefit of others; To talk of his

Statutes

Statutes, and not to be aſhamed. Though in our Age it is ſtiled canting, yet not to be afraid of the reproach. However, let thoſe be acquainted who caſt it upon others, for ſpeaking of Gods Law; I ſay, let ſuch have a Care how they put an opprobrious and ſlighting term upon the Language of the holy Ghoſt. Thoſe who are not openly prophane will reply, they do not intend Scripture in ſo ſpeaking, but are againſt the unſeaſonable Citation thereof by ſuch a one. There are ſome who would have us be Chriſtians only at Church or Prayers, and think it unbecoming to hear or Diſcourſe of the Word but at thoſe times; whom *Moſes* hath long ſince anſwered, and undoubtedly he knew what was moſt acceptable, and well-pleaſing unto God. Theſe words which I command thee this day ſhall be in thine Heart: And thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children: And thou ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine Houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lyeſt down, and when thou riſeſt up, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7. It was not only to be in the Synagogue but at home; not only in their Family-worſhip, but when they walked abroad. Was this Commandment to the *Jews*, and not to *Chriſtians* alſo? Have we not as great Promiſes and ſtrict Obligations to Duty as they had? Are we not to glorifie God in our words as well as they? Or ſhall they be all confined to Worldly buſineſs, idle Tales and Impertinencies, and not be allotted to the one thing needful, our eternal Welfare? This would be more right and ſeemly, if the things of the next Life were little and periſhing, and thoſe here great and enduring; for if it were ſo, ſome could not be more buſie in the Affairs of this, and negligent to the other: When it is juſt contrary, for in a little while, and theſe ſhall not be, day by day ſingle Perſons are taken from them, when the other ever remain. It is not abſolutely neceſſary for Men in all times, and in all places to talk of nothing but good things, (though indeed the more the better) for there are other innocent Topicks of Diſcourſe. As the Changes and Chances of this World, which ſerve to magnifie Providence, and divert the mind; and all thoſe things wherein is no harm or evil, for uſe may be made of what go under the Name of indifferent things. Then concerning buſineſs, and the way of management, how to direct our Actions. As for *Mat.* 12.36. it is ſuppoſed our Saviour intended againſt falſe words, as may be gathered from *Ver.* 31, 32, 33, 34.

and

and the reaſon added, ver. 37. But if it were ſo underſtood, by which no real profit accrues to the hearer, then by our words all of us would be in danger to be condemned. There is no parrallel place of Scripture, which confirms that ſtrict acceptation. Indeed a good Man doth not willingly give way to that diſcourſe, for which none is better afterwards, yet if the company be delighted with it, and it is not evil directly or indirectly, the Pleaſure thereof ariſes from mutual conference; ſo if this diverts, the end is anſwered. Our Maſter is not auſtere, but willing that his Servants ſhould take ſome delight in Converſation. But it is to be remembred whom we ſerve, the God of Knowledge and Wiſdom, and not Belzebub the God of flies; ſo it is to be deſired, that all our diſcourſe were ſubſtantial and grave, and we were come up to that degree of underſtanding, to find more joy and ſatisfaction therein, then others do in vain and uſeleſs things. It is in no wiſe irkſome or unpleaſant to thoſe who have the Love of God in them. There are ſome whoſe Religion conſiſt in talk, who ſay, and do not, *Mat.* 23. 2. Who think, and would put off the Commandments of God, by uſing their Mouth to Holy and Divine things, which themſelves do not mind in the Heart, nor obey in their Life and Actions; theſe are fooliſh and deceived. Others take up Religion for a ſupplement of Diſcourſe; when they are at a ſtand, and know not what to ſay elſe, it comes in after and only for want of other talk. Theſe act unworthily towards him who is moſt Great and Glorious. *So ſpeak ye, and ſo do as they that ſhall be judged by the Law of Liberty*, Jam. 2. 12.

of Actoins. The rule of Action is the whole Scripture as it relates towards God, our Neighbour (all which may be judged of by *Mat.* 7. 12.) and to our ſelves. Gods Glory is to be the end of all, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. By his word all the Actions of mankind may be determined whether good or evil. Where no Law is there is no Tranſgreſſion, *Rom.* 4. 15. And where there is either going contrary or leaving it undone, is Sin. Eſchew evil and do good, is a comprehenſive Command reaching to all our ways. The example of our Lord, Acts, 10. 38. is obligatory to all according to their Capacity and Station, to do what good they can whilſt in the World; to profit whom they are able, but to hurt none. Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever you do, Reſpect is to be had unto God, for his Government extends over the whole

whole Man, even the thoughts and intents of the Heart. All the faculties of Soul and Members of Body, are to be made inſtruments of Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs, which were before inſtruments of Sin unto Iniquity.

This is a bleſſed change which every one would have, if he did throughly underſtand the true worth thereof, but an Enemy doth hinder, whom the Captain of our Salvation would enable to reſiſt, if he would follow the directions, and uſe the Power given him. He prompts and inclines when the other doth beat off. The Temptation is near the ſame with our Lords invitation, who promiſes reſt; the other makes a propoſal and offer of Happineſs. If the poor Man is overcome by cunning perſwaſions, then he is held Captive, he hath leave for a while to intoxicate himſelf with Pleaſures, that he may not be ſenſible of his enſlaved condition. Outward objects are provided to divert him from looking within; by theſe, as Children with Toys, the Soul is deluded ſome time, but at length grows weary. He finds no real ſatisfaction in any thing, he knows not what to do, Conſcience will move him towards Repentance. Then comes the evil one to affright him from conſidering of his ways. If the evil ſpirit is in danger to be caſt out, he doth foam and rage; the poſſeſt is in as great a combuſtion as if he were caſt into the Fire; and therefore ſome fearful Souls will rather endure the Bondage ſtill, then bear the trouble of driving it out; like ſilly Patients die of their Sores, rather then ſuffer them to be ſearched to the bottom. But there are others who dare grapple with this Power of darkneſs, Faſting and Prayer are excellent Weapons; the Soul being freed from the clog of Meat and Drink, is more ſtrong and vigorous, ſo fitter for the Combate; by the latter he is called to aſſiſtance, *Who for this purpoſe was manifeſt in the Fleſh, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil*, 1 John. 3 8.

When the ſtrong-holds of Sin are pulled down, the Enemies turned out, the Conqueror will ſucceed in the room, Chriſt dwell in him, and he in Chriſt, *If a Man love me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*, John 14. 23. If he know when he is well, he will endeavour to continue ſo, not admitting of any Sin, leaſt by the filthy ſmoke thereof he ſhould offend and cauſe to go away the undefiled one of God, who holds his Soul in Peace and Bleſſedneſs. This condition any one may arrive at, through

through the Grace that came by Jesus Christ. A Prize is put into our hands, which (if we have the heart to use the means) we shall certainly obtain. It is no great matter, only to obey the Gospel, which is what a wise Man could choose to do, if no recompence of reward was to be revealed hereafter, for such true satisfaction (which nothing else can give) arises to the mind through well doing, that this alone is sufficient motive.

There is more sincere Pleasure in abstaining from evil thoughts then yielding to them, the mind is serene and clear; and meditation of good things is sutable to its nature, hath neither Shame nor Repentance following it. What are called common and indifferent things, they do equally divert as what are sinful and strange. To speak the truth is natural, there is no difficulty and trouble to find out evasions, or avoid self-contradiction. There is no danger for him to be entangled in his talk, who speaks nothing but truth, for that is consonant to it self. Lying is shameful and hated, who are addicted to it would not be accounted so, it is odious in the opinion of the worst of Men. Slandering, Flattery and other Sins of the Tongue are abominated by all that have but common nature and ingenuity. As for vain Swearing, those who use it will acknowledge there is no Pleasure nor Profit; yea, but there is Fashion and Custom. 'Tis strange that one is not reputed a compleat Gentleman, unless he affront his Maker; nor a Souldier without bidding defiance to the *Lord of Hosts*. Doth it sound great and majestick? But how improper is it for a Worm of five or six foot long, to use it against the expres's Command of him described, *Isa.* 40.12, 15, 17,22. And who hath said, which he hath also fulfilled in fore-going Generations; *I will cause the arrogancy of the Proud to cease, and will lay low the Haughtiness of the Terrible*, Isa. 13.11. Did men really believe and consider his Infinite Greatness, Power and Truth, who hath affirmed he will not hold them guiltless that take his Name in vain, they would not do it so often upon the meerest trifles. If they are such Fools to say in their Heart, there is no God, Why are they yet greater to take that in their Mouths, which in their imagination is nothing? But his Being is as true as that there is a World, and any thing in it, more certain then that they live, for he was before, and so remains, notwithstanding all their silly fancies: Themselves will find there is a God that judgeth the Earth, and when he cometh, *Every one that Sweareth*

Sweareth shall be cut off as on that side, Zech. 5. 13. They are the more inexcusable because they have so little Temptation to this Sin; the commonness whereof seems to be imputed to that perverse humour of some who will therefore do it because God hath forbidden it. *Be not Merciful to any wicked Transgressors*, Psal. 59. 5.

Perjury is Infamous amongst all Nations; some have thought no punishment too severe for it. God is highly provoked and dishonoured, the forsworn Wretch as far as lieth in his power makes him an Instrument and Partner to his own deceit and malice: As if the fountain of Truth were false as himself, he calls him for witness to a mischievous Lie. He prays God would help him according to the Truth he speaks, but prevaricates that, and his prayer shall turn into his own Bosom, and so be destitute of his aid, without which he shall perish. If God did not keep silence, none would presume to do after this manner, and then could be no Tryal; but in the other World shall be found true what is written, Ps. 50. 21.

The Atheistical Disputer (whom after-Ages will hardly believe to have ever been) is more plagued with fears of eternal Vengeance, then all the affectations of wit and applause amongst his monstrous Herd amount unto. And this disadvantage lieth against him, that those things are true even before Men were, or could argue against them; and so remain notwithstanding all absurd and foolish Imaginations. It is better and more happy not to offend with the Tongue, then to let it loose to its several kinds of Sin and Irregularity.

As for Actions, What doth yield more real content then to do justly? The rules whereof none violates without Regret and Condemnation. There is an inward and sensible grief, when any thing is done contrary to the Law written in the Heart. It is vexation to reflect upon an injury done, and they cannot endure to look the person in the face against whom it was; and which is yet worse, will add hatred and evil speaking to excuse themselves from the Wrong. But the upright keeping a Conscience void of offence toward God and Man, is not afraid nor ashamed to see any one; Though he is profitable to himself (as the end of things will manifest) yet he will now rather receive then do Wrong, and hath for earnest of reward, a free undisturbed mind. So much in general of Thoughts, Words and Actions.

Come we to Mans bodily Frame and Conſtitution with the growth, and ſeveral Periods thereof. It is compoſed of Fleſh and Blood, Bones and Sinews, curious in its Contrivance, each Member fitted for the reſpective Office, no part uſeleſs, and the whole ſo knit together that the Work denotes God to be the only Author thereof, *Pſal.* 119. 13, 14, 15, 16. *He made us, and not we ſelves*, Pſal. 100. 3. This is here inſerted, becauſe ſome ungodly natural People attribute too much to themſelves, as their Parents were cauſes of them, and they of their Children. This Temper ariſeth from unbelief and ignorance, and is much different from that of the Patriarch, when his Wife ſaid, Give me Children, or elſe I die; his Anger was kindled greatly againſt her, and he ſaid, Am I in Gods ſtead, who hath with-held from thee the Fruit of thy Womb? *Gen.* 30. 1, 2. *Pſal.* 127. 4. But thoſe would rob God of his Honour, and, who cannot make one hair White or Black, nor add one Cubit to their Stature, think that they give being to their Poſterity; and if they had not been, neither ſhould the others. As if the Almighty could not have brought themſelves into the World otherwiſe, then by means of the Parents they had. This is to *limit the holy one of Iſrael*, Pſal. 78. 41. to confine his Power, who hath made Heaven and Earth, and there is nothing too hard for thee, *Jer.* 32. 17. Who might have ordered us of this Generation, and of this or that Family, to have been born of Heathen Parents, placed us in another Nation, brought us into being a thouſand years ſince, if he had ſo pleaſed. God hath eſtabliſhed a Courſe of Nature, and Acts according to it, but therein Parents are only the inſtrumental cauſe of our Being. And call no Man your Father upon the Earth: For one is your Father which is in Heaven, *Mat.* 23 9. Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? *Mal.* 2. 10. Thou O Lord art our Father, we are the Clay, and thou our Potter, and we are all the Work of thy hand, *Iſa.* 64. 8. Without an Almighty power that ordereth, it cannot be imagined ſo excellent a Creature ſhould proceed from ſuch a mean beginning. The Fathers according to the Fleſh do nothing towards the infuſion of the Soul, and for the viler part, no more then the Husband-man to make the Corn grow, only ſcattering the Grain in the Earth. Haſt not thou poured me out as Milk, and Crudled me like Cheeſe? *Job* 10. 10. They are but inſtruments in the hand of God, and by the meanneſs of them (if the blinded World did ſee as much) he

See Iſa. 24. 15.

he doth the more magnifie his own Power. It ſhould teach us to abaſe our ſelves, and the more to exalt our Maker. Who might have created all mankind, as he did the firſt immediately out of the Earth in fulneſs of Stature, or to grow as Trees and Vegetables; but by the ſame Wiſdom he made the Heavens, hath ordained this only way of coming into the World; His Son was born of a Woman, not by way of common Generation; the bleſſed Virgin did not know Man, *The Holy Ghoſt came upon her, the Power of the Higheſt over-ſhadowed her, and therefore that holy thing was born of her, which was called the Son of God*, Luk. 1. 35. All we that are conceived in the heat of Concupiſcence are defiled, but Chriſt ſanctified the Womb. He ſubmitted to the meanneſs of our Birth, that he might take our whole Nature upon him, Sin only excepted.

Of Infancy and Childhood.

The Prophet, *Ezek.* 16. 4, 5. deſcribes our Birth, the poor Infant comes forth in Pain, and being expoſed to unuſual Light and Cold, ſhews its diſlike by Crying. It is more deſtitute, weak and ignorant then other Creatures at firſt are; they never ſinned, but our moſt merciful God hath provided for this by implanting a Care and Affection in the Mother. By degrees the Child is brought up, and howſoever deſpicable it ſeemeth in our Eyes. *O Lord out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings, haſt thou ordained Strength*, Pſal. 8. 2. Our Saviour hath teſtified his Love and regard for them, *Mat.* 18. 19. & 19. 14. Even Men of perfect Stature muſt be born again, or they cannot ſee the Kingdom of God, *Joh.* 3. 3. *Luk.* 18. 18. *In malice be Children, but in underſtanding be Men*, 1 Cor. 14. 20. The tender Infant hath not ſo much of this, as forefooted Beaſts and Creeping things; every toy and trifle pleaſes him for the preſent, then he is weary of the ſame thing, (an Emblem that we are in purſuit after Happineſs, but do not find it) He affects Variety of Fooleries, which delight becauſe he knows nothing better, but as he grows up he puts away theſe things for more manly. There is a Series of Play-games, thoſe that come to be the beſt and wiſeſt Men, when in this Age, ſpake as a Child, underſtood as a Child, and thought as a Child, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. At this time of Life God winks; and as the Follies thereof are not remembred by us, ſo neither will they be imputed by our merciful Father. Though it paſſeth away pleaſantly, (we then taking as great delight in Rattles, as afterwards the more ſtudied Pleaſures) yet none

envies the Happineſs of Children, their Recreations being idle and vain. By little knowledge and reaſon begin to appear, which is improved by Tutors and Governors. The workings of corrupt Nature are firſt diſcovered by Pride and Self-will, which laſt is ſomewhat reſtrained by them. Whereat he is angry and troubled, Not conſidering the kindneſs of his Parents is greater in providing him proper Learning and Inſtruction, then as they were inſtrumental of his coming into the World, for a Being only is not deſirable unleſs Happineſs is annexed to it, and that cannot be had without knowledge. The Spring of Life is the only time for that to bud forth and grow; the apprehenſion is lively and brisk, the Memory good, nothing to hinder, and all things are eaſie in our firſt years. No Seed ever came to perfection which was not ſown then, and if it be well harrowed in afterwards by ſtudy and meditation, it will yield a plentiful Crop, to the great Satisfaction of the Owner. If diligence be anſwerable to his advantages, he will be both Wiſe and Learned. If deſigned for a Trade or Civil employment, this is no burden, but will ſhew how to manage Affairs with more Diſcretion, but it much more helps to Spiritual and good things; the Faculties begin to be more widened, and after they have been ſome while inured to Reaſon, aſcend higher to be capable of Divine and Heavenly things.

Of Youth. The Giddineſs of Youth is a mighty impediment to both, they are for being their own Men, and following their own ways; To be Brisk, Lightſome, and Playing mad Pranks. They are not ſo prudent to Conſider their own ways, but follow wicked Courſes with haſte and ignorance, as the Horſe ruſheth into the Battle. We will deny our ſelves nothing Luſt craves for, but ſatisfie that in every particular. All our ſtudy ſhall be to find out what Pleaſure to divert our ſelves with; If it be ſuggeſted, that Religion contradicts this Licentiouſneſs, they mock or deſpiſe; Say they, We will let Religion alone for Melancholly Fools, old Perſons or ſilly Women. But ſtay a little: Is not all this Humour and Bravery in order to a ſuppoſed Happineſs? And what if thou ſhouldſt miſs the real by ſuch vain imaginations, and a few tranſitory Acts? That of *Eccleſ.* 11. 9. hath a ſad ſting in the end, *For all theſe things God will bring thee unto Judgment.* This know, that Religion (which none can reproach or contemn but ignorantly or unadviſedly) is not a thing indiffe

indifferent: Men may uſe it, or not at their Pleaſure, as Convenient and Prejudicial to other purpoſes. No ſuch matter, *It is juſt that all People, young Men and Maidens, old Men and Children; nay, they muſt whether they will or no be ſubject unto God.* If they are ſo of a willing mind and free Choice, he is pleaſed to accept thereof, and will reward them. But if not, their refuſal is Contempt and Diſobedience; which will be puniſhed accordingly. *We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, for as it is written, As I live ſaith the Lord every knee ſhall bow to me, and every Tongue ſhall Confeſs to God, ſo then every one of us ſhall give Account of himſelf to God,* Rom. 14. 10. 11, 12. Every Perſon now upon the Earth, or was heretofore, or ſhall be, muſt either go to Heaven or Hell. It is thus O young Man; But theſe things are not minded. Their deſire is not to be ſenſible of danger, till they have irrecoverably plunged themſelves in. As if miſery was the leſs, when not foreſeen; whereas this will be a ſtinging Aggravation, for had they done ſo they might have prevented it. Is any Worldly evil leſs grievous, when we fall into it through our own Folly and neglect? If it might have been avoided by knowledge and care before hand, but is not, this doth enhance the Bitterneſs and Anguiſh of Soul. Inconſideration is the property of Fools, and hath Repentance always following it, but is much worſe in the Concernments of eternal Happineſs or Miſery, for an Error here is Remedileſs. As the Tree falls ſo it lieth, for thoſe who continually ſtand upon the Brink of the bottomleſs Pit, and are only holden from dropping by the breath in their Noſtrils, not to look on their danger, that they may go further from it, is moſt unreaſonable. Eſpecially ſeeing they are afraid of the leaſt evil, a ſlight imaginary Dulneſs, by which the Temper bears them of from deſiring the knowledge of Gods ways, or ſo much as reflecting on their own.

There are ſome who have a little more Conſideration, but are unwilling to leave the Company and pretended Joviality of their Equals for fear of reproach, or to be out of Faſhion, and therefore will Swear, Drink, Whore, Talk filthily, yet they (retaining ſome Senſe of Gods diſpleaſure, and their own future Account) think to make up for all by intending to repent hereafter. Let theſe be admoniſhed, Not to deſpiſe the Riches of his Goodneſs and forbarance, and long ſuffering, not knowing

that

that the Goodneſs of God leadeth thee to Repentance, *Rom.*2.4. And therefore in no wiſe ſhould be made an occaſion to put it off further. If thou doſt ever come to true Repentance, and the Love of God, thou wilt really wiſh thou hadſt ſerved him from thy youth up. It is the wiſeſt way whilſt in our power ſo to do, as we ought and ſhall deſire to have done; and again to let alone other things from which we are obliged to refrain; Seeing Chriſts eaſie Yoke muſt be put on, *It is good for a Man that he bear it in his Youth*, Lam. 3.27. If it ſeem unpleaſant at firſt, it is becauſe he *Is as a Bullock unaccuſtomed to the Yoke*, Jer. 31.18. This only reſtrains the Madneſs and Licentiouſneſs of that Age, but takes not away reaſonable and moderate delights, which a little uſe will render more pleaſing and acceptable then Lying Vanities. Be not afraid, you are not called forth to Melancholy and Miſery, but the proper act of Man. The end of our Redemption is, *That we might ſerve God without Fear, in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs before him all the days of our Life*, Luke 1.74, 75. And then certainly we muſt not exempt the choiceſt part thereof. It is ſaid in general, *Cain* brought of the Fruit of the Ground, he rendred ſome Homage and Duty; But *Abel* brought of the Firſtlings of the Flock, and the Fat thereof; and the Lord had reſpect unto *Abel* and his Offering. God required them under the Moſaical Diſpenſation, and Calves of a year old, and the firſt that opened the Womb; thereby ſignifying that our Bodies ſhould be offered up unto him, as a living Sacrifice whilſt the Marrow is in our Bones, and they are of full health, ſtrength and vigour. To have the firſt Fruits of our Reaſon and Underſtanding ſet a part for him. Though he could have commanded every day and moment of our Lives; took us to his ſervice (as the Ox and Aſs for ours) when he pleaſed, without making any queſtion or diſpute concerning it, yet he leaves us to our Liberty: But how doth he reſent it, when freely offered and given up unto him? *Thus ſaith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindneſs of thy Youth*, Jer. 2.2. ſee Hoſ. 11.1. 2. Chron.34.3. Mark 10.21. Theſe are written for the Exhortation and Encouragement of all, to come betimes, for God hath a peculiar Favour, and doth take notice of them, for only doing that which is the duty of all to do; *To follow after him that is the guide of our youth*, Jer. 3.4.

The nature of the Chriſtian warfare and ſtate of its Enemies, re-

require the chief time of Life to encounter with them. When he is Listed at Baptism, he takes an Oath to fight manfully against the World, the Flesh and the Devil. The latter is most maliciously set against us, *Rev.* 12. 12. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. whom we must *Resist stedfast in the Faith, by this Shield we shall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked*, Eph. 6. 16. The Angel of the bottomless Pit is often transformed into an Angel of Light, yet if we are so happy, *As from Childhood to have known the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 14, 15. We shall not be ignorant of his devices, nor be beguiled through his subtilty. *Resist the Devil and he will flee from you*, Jam. 4. 7. This subdued, the next is our own dear self, for though none ever hated his own Flesh, but loves and cherishes it, yet that when too much cockered and luxuriant turns our Enemy; When Blood runs warm in the veins, the Sences quick and brisk, that is rampant and would get Dominion over us; The Commands are directed accordingly, *Flee youthful Lusts*, 2 Tim. 2. 22. *If ye live after the Flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live*, Rom. 8. 13. *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lust thereof*, Rom. 13. 14. When overmuch fuel is taken away, the fire will do no hurt, but serve only for its necessary use. Another Enemy is the World, which with its pomp and glittering is apt to deceive new and tender minds, but if they be seasoned with the Love of God and Knowledge of his Word, particularly what is written *Jam.* 4. 4. 1 *John* 2. 14, 15, 16, 17. 1 *John* 5. 4. this will cast out the love of the World; Faith overcomes it clearly, for what this assures of, doth so infinitely exceed Wordly Greatness and Glory, that they cannot hold due competition with the heavenly; manifest Sence sheweth that we are but Sojourners here, and have no continuing City; Faith seeks one to come; so we will hold no correspondence with what we are now in, then as furnishing conveniencies for, not to hinder our Journey. All these Foes are more dangerous, because they assault in the disguise of Friends, making a shew of Happiness, but deceive into Misery, and do most strongly tempt in our inconstant Age. They act subtilly, taking advantage of want of a through and perfect Understanding. But fore-warned and fore-armed. *Wherewithall shall a young Man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy Word*, Ps. 119. 9. Which discovers

vers the ſnare laid for him, and he may avoid it in the mid'ſt of his career, if he can duly ſtop or turn aſide. I have more underſtanding then my Teachers, becauſe I have learnt thy Word. Every thing done in the World is with intention and deſire after good, and that lays down certain directions for Happineſs; and avoiding Miſery, ſo this kind is moſt profitable.

If God did no more regard the Iniquities of Youth then Childhood, its Vanities were more allowable, as the effect of Mirth and Lightneſs, but there is not the ſame reaſon for both. *Children have no Knowledge between good and evil*, Deut. 1.39. but Youth hath or may have, which is the ſame thing. God expects when we know his Will, we ſhould do it, otherwiſe we Sin, and are liable to his Indignation, It would be impertinent for the Pſalmiſt to cry out, *O Lord remember not the Sins of my Youth*, Pſ. 25. 7. If God would never have imputed them. And Righteous *Job* would have falſly expoſtulated; *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the Iniquities of my Youth*, Job 13.26. ſo Jer. 31. 19. The juſt Judge of all the earth, calls to account for thoſe Tranſgreſſions, as of ſucceeding years. Good Men have been guilty of ſome Extravagancies at that time of Life, which are not written for preſumption and licence to Sin, but for the Hope and Comfort of thoſe who Repent as they did, and for thoſe who are not yet defiled with Wickedneſs, to keep their innocency. By their Examples it appears, that however ſweet in commiſſion, yet they are exceeding bitter in remembrance. Many ſecret, heavy, doubtful and diſturbed Thoughts did ariſe, as often as they did look back upon them; the pleaſure whereof was vaniſhed as if it had never been. All things conſidered, he conſults moſt for Gods Glory, and is wiſeſt for his own Peace, who remembers his Creator in the days of his Youth.

It is ſaid, *A young Saint an old Devil*. Which peſtilent Proverb ſprange frome him the Father of Lies, who will ſuffer himſelf to be abuſed for the advancement of his own Kingdom. There can be no ſuſpition or danger in the word of Truth, which requires, *To bring up Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, Ep.6 4. The wiſe Man renders a Reaſon for it, *Prov.* 22.6. This Age will gadly receive the impreſſions of good, which are as acceptable as thoſe of Sin and Evil. If they grow up and conſent with them, they become more cuſtomary

natural

natural and delightful, then unlawful Pleaſures are to others. The ſincerity of Youth taſts of the good Word of God and powers of the World to come, which have their due influence on ſuch a mind. The ſimplicity thereof doth highly approve the works of Righteouſneſs, which cannot be otherwiſe thought of, except by Corruption and Wrong. Would God theſe youthful qualifications might be ſtill retained, which in theſe and other inſtances are very advantageous for the things pertaining to him. This the Enemy of mankind knows, though he doth cunningly whiſper to the contrary, for he uſes endeavour to get the firſt Poſſeſſion into our Hearts. He will try to hinder our Sons from being, *As Plants growing up in their Youth.* And as far as the divine permiſſion extends, will graft into tender Stocks, the wild Olive-Tree, that it may become fruitleſs, hewn down and caſt into the fire. He ſhews forth many alluring baits and fair promiſes to beguil fooliſh nature to himſelf. If he gets young Souls he hath half done his work. When he hath them in invincible clutches, he inſtils a diſlike of Holineſs, inſinuating as if God's Law was too ſtrict, it curbs free nature, and deprives of Happineſs. Why ſhould not a young Man enjoy pleaſure? He furniſhes with ſeveral Commendations of Drunkenneſs, Luſt and other deeds of darkneſs. He uſes all tricks and devices, to get our firſt years, for if he miſſes them, he very ſeldom recovers the following, ſo contrary it proves to the forementioned ſaying. If a man keeps all Gods Commandements from his Youth, knowing that therein is great reward, and having reſpect ſtill to that he deſpiſes the preſent pleaſures of Sin, finding more ſatisfaction in the way he walks in. He knows the neceſſity and encouragement of Perſeverance, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. 2 *John* verſe 8. *Rev.* 2. 10. It cannot be denied, but there have been ſome Apoſtates, (the Scripture never ſuppoſes or cautions againſt a vain and impoſſible thing, ſee *Pſ.* 125. 5. *Ezek.* 18. 24. *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. & 10, 26, 38. & 12, 15. 2 *Pet.* 2. 21, 22.) but theſe are few in compariſon of thoſe who hold out unto the end. If they are well grounded in the Faith, and lay a good Foundation: If they are quite gone out of *Egypt*, and leave *not a hoof behind*, Exod. 10. 26. forſaking every evil way, the Sin as dear to them as their right Eye. And then if they ſincerely endeavour ſtill, and are not lazy or negligent, not omitting the means of Grace; there is no great fear but theſe will receive the end of their Faith, the Salvation of their Souls. Theſe love God and are loved by him; *Who loves with an everlaſting Love*, Jer. 31. 3.

Theſe ſhall receive the Crown of Life which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him, Jam. 1. 12. If *Satan* deſires to ſift them as Wheat, yet our bleſſed Advocate prevails, that their Faith fail not. The miniſtring Spirits, *Heb.* 1. 14. *Pſ.* 91. 11. 2 *Kings* 6. 16. preſerve againſt the deſtroying. We are put in mind of good, to defeat the ſuggeſtions of evil; endued with ſpiritual Wiſdom to diſcern and avoid the Crafts and Deceits of our Adverſaries. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leaſt he fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *And having done all to ſtand*, *Eph.* 6. 13. (for Chriſtianity is not an idle ſtate, but compared to a Pilgrimage which is always going forward, and uſing care not to be out of the way) there is no doubt that the aforementioned Speech will ever be found true in him; which ought to be razed out of the number of Proverbs, whoſe nature is to be true for the moſt part, but this is moſt commonly falſe, and rules are laid down that it may be always.

Let none hence be diſcouraged from early walking in the way to Heaven. We have a long Journey to go, the ſooner we ſet out, ſo much the better. If in the Spring time he hath all the year before him, obſerving the directions in Scripture, he ſhall neither miſs the way, nor be diſappointed of the end, which he propoſes to himſelf. For the Lord never ſaid to the Houſe of *Jacob*, nor any one elſe, *Seek ye my face in vain*; *Gird thy Sword upon thy Thigh, O moſt mighty with thy Glory and Majeſty*; *And in thy Majeſty ride proſperouſly, becauſe of Truth and Meekneſs and Righteouſneſs*, Pſ. 45. 3,4. *Looking unto Jeſus* (there Propheſied of) *the Author and Finiſher of our Faith. Conſider him leaſt you be weary and faint in your mind*, Heb. 12. 2,3. *Grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. till thou come to the fulneſs of Stature, to be a Perfect Man, both in the divine and common acceptation, which is the third ſtage of Life.

Of Manhood.

In which we are properly Men and reaſonable Creatures; the Body being at its utmoſt pitch, the underſtanding ripe and ſound. Now we have a right eſtimate of things in their own nature; what we formerly admired and were pleaſed with, we daily diſeſteem. The gayeties of Youth appear fooliſh and deſpiſable. Our thoughts are altered to more ſubſtantial things. Company and getting of Money are two principal things this time is taken up with, and therefore it is not to ſtep much beſides the ſubject

Subject matter, to treat ſeverally of them (according to our purpoſed method in their rightful uſe, and contrary abuſe; all in purſuance to the general Argument. Company is thought one of the chief good things belonging to the Sons of Men, which whoſoever doth not care for, is pitied as Melancholy and Miſerable. Indeed we are made for Society, and there is implanted an inclination in our Nature towards it. Our Lord when he dwelt among us, did freely converſe with mankind. So did his Apoſtles. They did endeavour to turn many into the right way from whence they had ſtrayed, and did effectually anſwer the end of Society by doing good to others. As for thoſe who retire and ſhut themſelves from the World upon the account of Religion, do otherwiſe then thoſe, who did underſtand and Practice it moſt. Let them ſpend much time in Devotion, yet *What receiveth he of thine hand? Thy Righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man*, Job 35. 7, 8. but who runs away, he doth not exerciſe Acts thereof. How can he love his Neighbour as himſelf? (which is one half of his Duty) who never performs Offices of kindneſs unto him? The Saints of old did not lurk in Dens and Caves of the Earth till driven there by Perſecution. And *John* Baptiſt was in the Deſerts till the day of his ſhewing unto *Iſrael*, *Luk.* 1. 80. but after he Preached and lived among Men. There is no example or precept in Scripture for the ſolitary Life. The wilful Hermite (who is for pleaſing God in a way he hath not ſhewed nor commanded) doth alſo violence to his own juſt Inclinations, is continually diſcontented, and wiſhes he had never been, for he lives only to be ſenſible of ſad Reflections. He frets at the heavy Yoke he bears, which as God ordained is eaſie and Light, but himſelf by Additions hath made inſupportable. His Life through his own Fooliſh choice, is become like the Owl in the Deſert, or the penſive Inhabitants of the Wilderneſs.

Of Company and Solitarineſs.

Let not the Reader miſ-apprehend here or in any other place, for the things themſelves are not ſo much ſpoken againſt as the Exceſs, and abuſe of them. Mans Nature (which muſt be Corrected in order to Happineſs) is addicted to extreams; in declining one he runs to the other, and leaves the middle way of Truth, ſo turning aſide into the by-paths of Error. Some being ſenſible of the inconvenience of too much Solitarineſs, therefore will not uſe it at all; and yet great advantage may be thereby received. One may better converſe with God by Prayer

and good Thoughts. Our bleſſed Lord would go up to a Mountain to that intent, upon it was transfigured, and thence aſcended into Heaven. And who would follow him thither, it is now expedient he ſhould ſometimes go alone up to high places, from whence he lifts up his Eyes, and as he ſurveys the Creation in the height, in the length and breadth; all things appear little and inconſiderable below. As he there takes a Proſpect, he is not raviſhed with the glittering Pomp of Worldly Grandeur. A numerous Army make a goodly ſhew to By-ſtanders, but ſeems to him as a Company of fabulous Pigmies, and the greateſt Commander is looked on as a ſmall deſpicable Creature. Populous Cities and all the Inhabitants thereof are as a Bee-hive, ſome going in and ſome coming out, *Men walking in a vain Shew and diſquieted in vain*, Pſ. 39. 6. The beſt way to deſpiſe the World, to behold it from ſome great exceeding high Mountain. By meditation in Retirement, and obſervation in the Streets, we may at length have a true apprehenſion of the very Nature of things freed from that deceitful varniſh and appearance. But they are diſcovered to be tranſient, little and unſatisfactory, ſo there is leſs Temptation to fix up a Reſt here, but we are moved to ſeek that which remaineth for the People of God. If we did always run up and down the City, we ſhould not be ſo ſenſible of this, the Heart will not Soar up where true Joys are only to be found, when it is preſſed down with the fancied Delight of Buying, Selling and getting Gain. It is neceſſary to come out from Worldly buſineſs, and to be alone. Which is not ſo unpleaſant as commonly imagined, according as the Perſon is. *A good Man is ſatisfied from himſelf*, Prov. 14. 14. As he walks out in the Fields to meditate, he is as well pleaſed as others in great and jovial Company. A Bird ſings ſweetly within; Thoughts of innocence and the good he hath done and will continue in, afford more Complacency then all the Variety of the World.

The ungodly are not ſo, Pſ. 1. 4. for what is the others Comfort, is Torment to them. They run to the Covert of Taverns and Alehouſes, and intermix with the Herd of fellow-Creatures, if they may loſe the Senſe of their Diſturber. They keep ſtill in ſome Company, for there is no ſuch ſecurity againſt their ſuppoſed Enemy. Theſe hate and declaim againſt Solitarineſs, for thereby the remembrance of Sin and Guilt, thoſe accuſings

and

and fears would be ſtirred up, which are ſo afflicting, that (if they will not obey and come to Repentance) they cannot endure what prompts to this good end. Yet ſuch paſs in the World, for happy brisk Men, and ſeem an unanſwerable Objection againſt the intended illuſtration. That great ſhew of Mirth and Jollity, make half thinking People judge them to be in a Bleſſed condition. It is to be known, that all the Pleaſures of ſin are only outwards, they are loud and viſible when there is no inward and ſenſible rejoycing: Or, like a flaſh of Lightning, they may tranſport for a moment, when the mind is more Dark and Cloudy afterwards. Take them amidſt good Fellowſhip, they are at firſt heavy, till their Spirits are revived by ſtrength of Liquor. Hence drinking is ſo much in Faſhion, there is a deep Melancholy in its Followers by contracted Guilt, that they cannot be really chearful till half Drunk, and they cannot Laugh heartily till this hath cauſed them to ſtammer and bubble at the Mouth. The moſt jovial Companion out of his Cups, is no more then others. 'Tis an excuſe in every Mans mouth, they drink only for the ſake of Company. Each Perſon will ſay, he had rather not, and then it is a frivolous and falſe Pretence, for the whole cannot be deſirous of that whereof no part is. But this is a Fig-leave to cover the ſhame of this ſin, for they will ſpeak againſt it with their Tongue, when they wiſh in their Heart to be pouring down, knowing they cannot be Merry till they have had ſome quantity thereof. Company is nothing worth, if they have not ſome of the good Creature to exerciſe themſelves withal. The Lethargy of ſin hath brought them into ſuch a Damp, that they are ſcarce enlivened till they find this ſtir in their Bodies. The Clamours of Conſcience are drowned with the noiſe of Company, chaunting to the Viol and other kinds of Muſick. They comply with, and approve of the ungodly Speeches and Actions of thoſe they converſe with; They drink with the Drunkard, Talk Laſciviouſly with the unclean, Frame their Mouth to common Swearing, by reaſon whereof the Land mourneth, *Jer.* 23. 10. Their chief aim being recommend to themſelves to Company, they will rather pleaſe a parcel of dying Men, then the ever-living God, and will give Preference to Earth-Worms before him who is over all God bleſſed for ever. They uſe Flattery, invent Lies, rather then ſpoil a pleaſant Story, take part with the Advocates for ſin. Either they do it themſelves, or ſilently hear.

hear the way of Truth evil ſpoken of, thinking by this baſe obſequiouſneſs to retain Friends. Thus *they treaſure up wrath againſt the day of wrath*, Rom 2. 5. And though they ſeem never ſo Cheerful in prophane Talk, *Scoffers and walking after their own ungodly Luſts*, though they make a ſhew not to value his diſpleaſure and threatnings: Yet, *The Lord ſhall laugh at him, for he ſeeth that his day is coming*, Pſ. 37. 13. Which will be upon him whether he thinks of it or not. *When thou crieſt, let thy Companies deliver thee, but the wind ſhall carry them all away*, Iſa. 57. 13. Before the laſt great Evil day cometh, he doth commonly fall into ſome dangerous and doubtful Sickneſs. And then if he looks back upon his Life paſt, and forward to the approaching Judgment, he is poſſeſt with Horror and ſtrange Amazement; *Like a wild Bull in a Net, full of the fury of the Lord.* Then he thinks; Had I followed Goodneſs half ſo eagerly as my Luſts, I ſhould not now be in this miſerable Condition. What Fruit have I of all paſt Jollities and ſinful Pleaſures? What hath Luſt profited me, or what good hath all pleaſant Cups done me? All theſe are paſſed away like a ſhadow. I ſee now the Vanity of theſe things, and ſhall I again purſue them? No I will not; if God is pleaſed to grant that I may recover, I reſolve on an intire Reformation; *The Lord is not willing any ſhould Periſh, but that all ſhould come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. He did defer the Judgment upon *Ahab* for his temporary Humiliation; ſo it may be obſerved in the general Order of his good Providence, that he doth ſeldom cut off any in the midſt of their Sins, without having given them warning by outward affliction, or ſome Sickneſs before; which is not unto Death, but the Glory of him in ſparing Sinners ſo long, and for the benefit of them, if they did make a right uſe of it. And commonly in their firſt Chaſtiſements they have ſuch thoughts, which in ſome are laſting and ſincere, ſpending the Reſidue of their Life in Gods Service; but with others they lye on the ſurface of the Heart and are taken away. At firſt perhaps theſe will give God thanks, declare how Gracious he hath been unto them, and this for fear of a Relapſe; but when perfectly recovered, they are ſoon won over by the Scoffs and Enticements of old Companions, they fall to the like courſe of iniquity, and *it is happened unto them according to the true Proverb, The dog is returned to his own Vomit again, and the Sow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the Mire*, 2 Pet. 2. 22.

Not

Not only to habituated Sinners, but unto all too much Company ceases to delight, is a distraction and prejudicial to Happiness. How can he converse with God, (which is Mans greatest Honour) who spends all the time with his Creatures? Those short intervals allowed for Devotion signifie nothing, for even then their Thoughts are taken off from the most sublime and excellent Object. How can he throughly understand Gods Law? (in whose knowledge and observation all our Happiness consists) who deprives himself of the leisure to study it. How can he ever know himself? Who makes it his only business to be known unto others. He cannot be Good or Holy, who keeps all sorts of Company. The greater part of mankind are wicked, so he who seeks out for all Acquaintance will meet with those, who by Evil Communications corrupt good Manners: It becomes a snare to most, and when in the midst thereof. *If any Man do not decline, or offend not in word, the same is a perfect Man*, Jam 3. 2. But thousands hereby have been betrayed into the ways of wickedness. Every Speech at the Gallows is a warning against evil Company, and the damned in Hell will for ever curse those that were the occasion of their coming there; many of good and honest Principles, of Rustick simplicity when once they come into *Babylon*, a Cage of every unclean Bird, they are well pleased with the abundance of her Delicacies, and so become Partakers of her Sins. The Devil hath his Agents, who use all means to make others such as themselves. Who sollicit mightily for the Advancement of his Kingdom. Through Envy they are not willing others should be more Happy then themselves, and therefore Labour to seduce them. They Laugh inwardly to see into what a Fools Paradise they lead young Schollars, the Pleasures will vanish and disappear to them also, and they are for making others as much Children of Hell as themselves. Wickedness through the multitude of its Followers hath crept into the Fashion of every place: Even under the Light of the Gospel more gross Deeds of Darkness are committed, then whom the day Spring from on high, hath not yet so fully visited; The Devil is most busie here, and must use more then ordinary diligence, knowing the others are already Captive and easily retained. There are so many of his servants gone forth into the World, that they intermix with all Companies. In too many they make up the majority, so the rest shall be subject unto their rules and discourse, which is wicked and filthy, befitting the sons of *Belial*. If

If a godly Man is amongſt them, *they keep cloſe and mark his Steps.* When he reproves according to *Eph.* 5.11. if he doth with meekneſs, they ſlight it; but if with boldneſs and power then they are enraged like ſo many Waſps. They will diſpute againſt him with reproach and evil ſpeaking. And do get the victory if multitude of words carry it, however, the prejudiced hearers conclude for that ſide which talks moſt and ſuitable to their own corrupt inclinations. Indeed ſeldom any good comes of this kind of reproof, and it were to be deſired few or none occaſions hereof did happen, for every one that feareth God ſhould not keep ſuch Company, but if he lights among them caſually, let him behave himſelf, as God's Word and his own Conſcience ſhall direct him; The rule is concerning doubtful Sins, to refrain is the ſafer way; ſo of controverted duty, it is the ſure ſide to perform. Here is ſome obligation from *Lev.* 19.17. None ought ſilently ſuffer Iniquity to bear down all before it, or to let words againſt faith and good-manners paſs uncontradicted. He muſt not be afraid nor aſhamed to ſpeak out for God and Religion, knowing what is written of the fearful *Rev.* 21.8. and of the ſhameful, *Mark* 8. 38. if he ſhould get hatred by reproving a Scorner, *Pro.* 9.7. yet therefore he ſhould not decline the promiſe of Jeſus; *Bleſſed are ye when Men ſhall hate you, and when they ſhall ſeparate you from their Company, & ſhall reproach you, and caſt out your name as evil for the Son of Mans ſake*, Luke 6.22, 23. If one is among wicked people, he doth either comply with them, which is Sin, or reprove, and then he is grievous unto them. *For what fellowſhip hath Righteouſneſs with Unrighteouſneſs, and what communion hath Light with Darkneſs? and what concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* 2 Cor. 6.14. *An unjuſt Man is an Abomination to the Juſt; and he that is upright in the way, is Abomination to the Wicked*, Pro. 29.27. *My Son if Sinners entice thee, conſent thou not*, Pro. 1. 10. It is more to be feared they will corrupt him, then he reform them: Many who begun well have turned aſide from the good way, and by ſeeing it made contemptible as is daily done by malicious Tongues, have changed their minds, and having been in the counſel of the Ungodly, themſelves at length ſtepped up to the Seat of the Scornful. Their former Righteouſneſs is turned into Wormwood, ſo bitter are they againſt it. Let none who are eſtabliſhed, run into unneceſſary danger, for it is folly to venture when there is no occaſion, which is rarely done

done without diminution of Love and Zeal, if not to overthrow the Foundation. It is indeed possible to retain uprightness and a good Conscience amongst the worst, but least they should be an occasion of falling, (for no Temptation is so strong as bad Company) it is godly discretion not to have intimate acquaintance with them, but only such as business and common civility doth require.

Sincere Friendship is to be reserved for the Faithful; an exaample hereof is the Man after God's own Heart. *In the Saints that are in the Earth, and the excellent is all my delight*, Ps. 16. 3. *I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy Precepts*, Ps. 119. 63. The Conversation of good Men doth instil principles of Honesty and Truth into the mind, settle the doubtful, recalls those that were going back to their own crooked ways, and establishes all in the right. The Holy Ghost recordeth even what seems lesser things, which serve for our use and instruction. *All that believed were together*, Acts 2. 44. The *Apostles went about from place to place, confirming the Souls of the Disciples*, Acts 14. 22. There is both profiting of himself and others by good Company. The Talent is not given to hide in a Napkin, but every one is to communicate according to that measure of Grace and Reason he hath received. And suffer himself to be admonished, for none is so wise or knowing, but he may both learn and be put in mind of several things from those who seem weak and foolish in the Eye of the World. Every one should endeavour to get a convenient number of good acquaintance, for there is such a mutual Love amongst real Christians, that they will do one another all the good they can. When these meet, they take as great delight in the language of *Canaan* as others in prophane talk. They are more pleased to build up one another in our most holy Faith, then others in discoursing of the best way for getting Offices or Preferment, Money or Estate, Honour and Pleasure. Whoever thinks this strange, it is because himself takes no delight in such kind of conference, for want of Faith and the Love of God. Society is not confined only to Heavenly discourse, there is as much subject matter for us as others, we can supply the defect of evil Communications with good. And then that variety of the occurrences of the World is common to all. But he whose mind ascends above these lower regions, is indeed diverted with hearing of the several changes Eccles. 4. 9. 19.

and accidents here, and he turns them into a good uſe; yet his chief delight is in ſuch diſcourſe which relates to his better part, and that Life which ſhall never end. He finds more real ſatisfaction in what is good to the uſe of edifying, then in the other kind which recreates only for the preſent, concerning thoſe things which in a ſhort time are to be done away. The Apoſtle finds fault with *Fooliſh Talking or Jeſting, which are not convenient*, Eph.5.4. They render Chriſtianity as a vain and light thing, ſuch a deportment is offenſive to thoſe within; and will be apt to diſgrace the Profeſſion to thoſe without, as if it was not equally, yea more grave and ſubſtantial then Philoſophy and human Wiſdom. *A good Man will guide his affairs with diſcretion*, Pſ 112.5. He knows how to behave himſelf with Company, and how without. He is endued with that ſelf-ſufficiency (through God) that he will not thruſt himſelf among all ſort of People good and bad; for he is well contented alone, and had rather be ſo then ſit among vain perſons, or have fellowſhip with the ungodly. He will not refrain from any out of a phariſaical ſupercilioufneſs, or ſay unto his Neighbour, *Stand thou by, and come not near me, for I am holier then thou*, Iſa. 65. 5. The Son of God did eat and drink with Publicans and Sinners; and therefore he will not ſcruple to converſe with any, except thoſe who are arrived at the height of Wickedneſs, who do not at all eſteem but mock the good Way, *With ſuch an one he is not to keep company, no not to eat*, 1 Cor.5.11. *Only let your Converſation be as becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt*, Phil. 1. 27.

Of Marriage.

Of all Company, Marriage is the moſt near and Honourable. It was Inſtituted in Paradice by God, *Gen.* 2. 18, 24. and after confirmed by our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, *Mat.* 19. 4,5,6. This is the eſtabliſhed means for the propagation, continuance and ſucceſſion of mankind: The Author of our nature hath implanted a ſtrong deſire and tendency towards it. We are not let looſe to unbounden Luſt, for that would bring ſtrange diſorder and confuſion into the World: None would know which were his own; Beſides ſuch a mixture and variety of Seed hinders Conception, as appears by common Proſtitutes. There would be much inconvenience and ruin, unleſs the great Law-giver had preſcribed ſuch Rules concerning this Ordinance, which (as his other Commandments are wiſely contrived, both to carry on the

Mal.2.14. 15.

Hoſ. 4.10.

Courſ

Courſe of the World, and alſo for tryal of Mans Obedience. In which laſt if he approves himſelf, he is promiſed Peace here and Glory hereafter. Adultery, Fornication, ſtrange Luſts are forbidden in the old and new Teſtament, they being contrary to this excellent order of Life, which would be miſerable if the Bed were not kept undefiled; the Apoſtle immediately adds, *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, Heb. 13.14 All the commands in Scripture relating to Husband and Wife, are exactly fitted for their mutual Comfort, which again is preſently loſt by diſobedience and variation from them. That Vexation and Diſcontent ſo common amongſt Married perſons, is becauſe they do not fulfil the Law of Love, and of bearing the Infirmities of one another: Husbands do not dwell with their Wives according to knowledge, giving Honour unto them as the weaker veſſel, or they obſerve not their Duty in ſubmitting unto and obeying their Husbands. They have not the Love of God in them, for here to apply that of the Apoſtle, He that loveth not his own Wife, which lies in his Boſom, whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen? If he did love, he would keep his Commandments, and not *deal Treacherouſly againſt the Wife of his Youth, who is his Companion, and the Wife of his Covenant*, Mal. 2.14. Neither would ſhe behave her ſelf deſpitefully againſt her Husband.

1 Pet. 3.7.

1 Joh. 4. 20.

Some enter upon this ſtate for worldly and carnal ends, as when Beauty, Riches and a good Family (as it is commonly ſtiled) are the reaſons why they determine their choice on ſuch an Object. Who inſtead of complying with thoſe ends of Marriage God hath ordained, frame others of their own Invention, what he Inſtituted as an happy ſtate of Life, themſelves going according to their own thoughts render miſerable. This is not ſo to be underſtood that none ſhould propoſe to himſelf any worldly end, for he may lawfully, but that muſt not be made chief. We have an example in *Abraham's* Steward, *Gen.* 24. of ſeeking unto God in the firſt place, All our Actions ſhould be to his Glory, and then this of ſo great moment is not to be exempted. We are to prefer his Commandment before all other things, and then temporal conſiderations may come in ſubordinate to that. But to have thoſe worldly things the only or principal inducement, is both ſinful and fooliſh, for the Man doth not take counſel of God, nor rightly conſult for his own Happineſs.

Of Beauty. To begin with Beauty, which indeed is Gods Bleſſing and Gift, perfect through his Comelineſs, but when it is *truſted unto*, Ezek. 16. 15. and made an occaſion to draw off from him, then it is neceſſary to diſcover the Truth and Nature thereof. It is one of the admired Idols of the World, which is had in Eſtimation for ſuppoſed good, though it be thin and vain. What is a well coloured Skin? Now Colour is no ſubſtantial thing, and therefore cannot give ſatisfaction which in it ſelf hath ſo little reality. A fair Woman hath Life and Motion, otherwiſe ſhe differs little from a well drawn Picture, which doth delight; the outward Lineaments do ſomewhat pleaſe, but nothing elſe. Excellent ſenſible Objects do by Conſtancy tire, and we at length become unaffected. Whether this doth hold true between married Perſons, they know who have the experience. But further it renders liable unto Temptations, ſo was *Joſeph* of old, and change the Sex, many are at this day; he did beat back the Sollicitations of his wanton Miſtreſs, with this ſingle Thought, *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Gen. 39. 9. Thoſe who now are alike tempted, may keep themſelves unſpotted by the ſame means. The fear of God is a ſure Preſervative againſt all Aſſaults of the wicked. If according to ſincerity and truth, it conſtantly withſtands the Temptation; natural Conſcience and inward Modeſty is another Band whereby God hath tyed us up to the obſervance of his Commands. But if theſe Cords are broken, none will hold. The fear of ſhame and diſgrace before the World is no reſtraint, if the Deed of darkneſs may be hid from the Husband and others. It is too well known and Practiſed that this may be done, *Who dare ſin when God ſees them, will likewiſe when Men do not ſee them*, for ſuch a place may be found out, but *the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the Evil and the Good*, Prov. 15. 3. The abomination of wickedneſs in our days is deſcribed, *Ezek.* 16. 32, 33, 34. Some maintain their indigent Gallants, and ſteal from their Husband to gratifie them. Thus, and other kind of ways, they make their Beauty to be abhorred.

Another inconvenience commonly attends it, Which is Folly: Not that I believe, God makes any one Fooliſh. All Souls are his, and there is no greater Diverſity between them at firſt, then the Stature, Similitude, or ſtrength of the Body. Natural Ideots are found to be ſo from defect or irregularity of the Organs

Organs within, as Blindneſs or Deformity without. But what goes commonly under the Name of Folly, is through our own fault and negligence. The mind is not improved for want of receiving in the words of knowledge and inſtruction, which are neceſſary to the growth and continuance in underſtanding, as Meat and Drink to the Fleſh. And then by not exerting, the faculties become dull and uſeleſs, as the ſlothful are unapt to work. This is the cauſe why Women in general are not ſo Wiſe and Learned as Men. Could we now ſee as God ſees, into the parts of the Soul, or as we ſhall when let ſlip out of this Fleſh, the Leanneſs and Blindneſs of ignorance, the Deformity and Crookedneſs of Folly, that drowſie unactive Diſpoſition would be as much deſpiſed, and we ſhould equally endeavour to ſtrive againſt them, as now we do ſuch defects of the Body. But the World is only for viſible and preſent things, and if they are well enough, do not ſo much care for the inviſible and future; when Faith and Reaſon do aſſure theſe will be viſible and preſent alſo, of longer continuance and greater Concern. Whoſe chief aim is to recommend themſelves before others, one excellent thing to ſet them of is thought ſufficient, they mind no more. So in the preſent inſtance it comes to paſs that Beauty is without Wiſdom. All the Care and Education is concerning that, but not to accompliſh the inward parts; for all Pride, Boaſting, and Self-conceit, yet a King and one Skilled in the Female Sex hath left this Character, *As a jewel of Gold in a Swines Snout, ſo is a fair Woman without Diſcretion*, Prov. 11. 22.

But ſuppoſe better; One who is Chaſt and Wiſe, Yet ſhe is ſubject to Accidents and decay. The Fruit of the Womb makes an Alteration in her Face, a fit of Sickneſs leſſens her ruddy Complexion, Sorrow and Diſcontent do impair it. If none of theſe ſhould be, ſtill the *Glorious beauty is a fading Flower*, Iſa. 28. 1. It declines in Summer, by little Periſhes in Autumn, and is quite withered in the Winter of Age. Then the furrows are caſt up: When once it is laid down it riſeth not till the Heavens be no more, and then that Love links which was only built on this rotten Foundation. To repair the ruins of time by Supplements of Art, to fill up the Wrinkles with Paint and Vermilion, is to ſtrive againſt Gods appointment. And this is a preſage (which they ſhould take as ſuch) of falling down lower into the Pit, where is an utter end of this eſteemed Perfection.

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In the place of Skulls they ſeem all alike, there is no diſcerning which in the time of its Fleſh was clothed with a fair Skin, or not. When we behold theſe grim Spectacles, there is nothing to be ſeen of flouriſhing Age. The uſe of all may be not to ſet the Affection on what is a meer idol of Happineſs. God hath purpoſely ordained our Excellency ſhould not lie in the Body; as appears not only from the matter thereof, but even from what ſeems lovely: There is very little in it, and few (not above one in an hundred) have that exact accompliſhed Beauty. And for thoſe who either have already, or deſire it; let them be exhorted to ſerve God and continue in all Obedience, not making it an occaſion of ſin, Pride, Vanity, Murmuring or Diſcontent; but Practice that of *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. then we have all Encouragement and aſſurance that, *our vile Body ſhall be changed that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body*, which will as much exceed the faireſt Complexion on Earth, as that doth the Face of a Toad. But whoſo will not do thus now, we ſee with our Eyes all that is above ſpoken of fulfilled, and further, *They ſhall be an abhorring unto all Fleſh*, Iſa. 66. 25. If they make the utmoſt of their Beauty, it is a vain and empty thing, which cannot profit nor ſatisfie, and ſuch is the danger thereof.

For the other inducement to Marriage, Riches; it hath been the juſt and good Practice of all Countries and Times to give ſomewhat in Dowry; but the Error is, when the leſs is made the chief and ſole Conſideration. Who are reſolved to enrich themſelves, and love the Wealth more then the Perſon, theſe are often deceived in their Propoſals and Expectation of Contentment, as common obſervation and experience do manifeſt. There are ſeveral inconveniences which over ballance the ſeeming Good, which need not be recited here, becauſe the end of Riches and their ſubſerviency to Happineſs is to be ſtated further on.

When Marriages are entred into upon indirect Conſiderations, the Miſery is ſenſible all the Life long. And indeed how can it be reaſonably expected, it ſhould be otherwiſe? When it is firſt grounded upon evil Principles. Thoſe which make Beauty the only end, are acted by Luſt, who affect Riches by Covetouſneſs, and another ſort by Pride. All which are contrary to Gods Law, And therefore who forſake the Living Waters, expecting ſatisfaction in broken Ciſterns, it is no wonder they greedily hunt after, but never find it. It is juſt that thoſe, Who deſpiſe Gods

directions

directions, and that Happineſs he hath provided for Men, and therefore do not ſeek of him, ſhould be tormented with the eager purſuit, and much more with a miſerable diſappointment, that their Mouth may be ſtopped, and forced to acknowledge, *As they cannot live nor move, ſo neither be Happy without him.* If they were really convinced of this, they would not be ſo often deceived with an Egyptian Reed, on which if a Man Lean it will pierce into his hand, nor in this important Concern ſet up falſe Ends, and Superior to thoſe of his ordaining.

The Apoſtle hath a whole Chapter, 1 *Cor.* 7. on this Subject, and towards the Cloſe gives inſtruction to Marry in the Lord. Whoever ſincerely Lives according to his Commandment cannot be an ill Wife. Chriſtianity endows with that Grace and Perfection, a meek Humour and Diſpoſition, ſuch an obedient and humble frame of mind, that if the Man hath the leaſt Ingenuity or good Nature, he muſt Love and Honour her. If theſe be wanting (let her make what Pretence ſhe will by going to Church, Devotion or ſanctified Talk) it is to to be feared, for by the Fruits you may know them, ſhe is an Hypocrite, for ſhe cannot be a good Chriſtian, who is not a good Wife; for that obliges to all that is commanded in Scripture concerning this Relation. *Whoſo findeth a Wife, findeth a good thing and obtaineth favour of the Lord. Let him rejoyce with her, let her be as the loving Hind and pleaſant Roe, let her Breaſts ſatisfie him at all times, and let him be always ravi ſht with her Love,* Prov. 5. 18, 19. *Live joyfully with the Wife whom thou loveſt, all the days of the Life of thy Vanity, for that is thy Portion in this Life, and in thy Labour which thou takeſt under the Sun,* Eccleſ. 9. 9. *When a Man hath taken a new Wife, he ſhall not go out to War, neither ſhall he be Charged with any buſineſs, but he ſhall be free at home one Year, and ſhall cheer up his Wife which he hath taken,* Deut. 24. 5. When they live together according to Gods Ordinance, there is no tormenting Jealouſie, no ſtrife nor brawling, Diſcontent, Upbraiding, Forwardneſs, nor ſcornful exaſperating Language, but all kindneſs and tender Affection is to be ſeen among them. Their Hearts are comforted, being knit together in Love. They are one Fleſh and Members one of another. If one ſuffers, the other doth alſo, and by a pleaſant Sympathy joyntly partake of their ſeveral Condition. He Mourns with her that Mourns, and rejoyceth with her that rejoyceth. It is thought by ſome that

that all difference of Sex will ceaſe, when thoſe things ſhall be laid aſide, that relate to Mortality and Imperfection, for *in the Reſurrection they neither Marry nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven*, Mat. 22. 30. Who are all of the ſame kind. As to the preſent time, *There is neither Male nor Female, but ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus*, Gal. 3. 28. Who was born of a Woman, that as the Tranſgreſſion came by her, ſo through her was conveyed the greateſt Good that ever came to mankind. Both are of the ſame Nature, Heirs of the ſame Promiſes, and it is equally the intereſt of each ſort, to endeavour through Gods Grace to be Happy.

Of Getting Money.

So much of Company and Marriage. The other thing, Men are taken up with, is Riches and getting of Money. Now if any cunning Rules were laid down for the procuring thereof; they would be read earneſtly and attentively with the utmoſt Examination. But do they not endeavour after it as a means to live happily? And as ſuch it is to be treated of. It is expedient to obtain the things pertaining to this Life, which are Meat, Drink, Raiment, Habitation, Honour, Pleaſure, and ſuch like. We cannot be aſcertained of them without Money; this need not to be inſiſted on, but only to put in mind for what end Money is neceſſary. The end is the Principal thing, which is or ſhould be more deſired then what tends only by the way towards it; and therefore if we can attain the end without ſo much aſſiſtance of thoſe Collateral means, they ſignifie nothing. The Goodneſs of Riches conſiſts only, that through Cuſtom other things are under the Power of them; which may be bought and had, and alſo in uſing them to this purpoſe. Food and Clothing are in their own Nature of more Worth and Excellency; but then as they Miniſter to Pride and Pleaſure, they are no end, but falſe and miſtaken means to Happineſs, as hereafter may be ſhewed. The abſurd Acting of the World lies in making that an end which is a means only, nay, which are wrong and contrary to the thing deſired. Happineſs is ſought for by the ways of Pride, Senſuality, and Covetouſneſs; now there is no need of going round about, when there is a direct Path; and further they will appear upon the diligent Search to lead an oppoſite way into Deſtruction and Miſery.

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The ſo much beloved Intereſt is ſought after in order to Satisfaction, for otherwiſe ſome would not by injuſtice and wrong endanger the loſs of their immortal Souls, to obtain Wealth or Eſtate. Some fond Conceits do ſpur them on, as they fancy it for their Honour and Credit, to be the Stock and Foundation of a great Family, ſo they ſhall be talked of through many Generations, when it will not extend further then that ſingle Houſe, and with them be forgotten in two or three Diſcents: And all is but the Breath of others, a weak and tranſitory thing for his whole Happineſs to ſubſiſt on. When by Commiſſion of Sin, and Omiſſion of Duty they enhance their future Account, miſ-employ that Diligence which might be ſpent, on a more excellent thing, waſte their Spirits, not enjoy what they have, deprive themſelves of beloved Sleep in Service of dear *Mammon*. If theſe make Pretences to Religion, that (which would moderate and rectifie) is made a furtherance to worldly Deſigns. This is to give them outward Reputation and Honeſty, ſo to get a Truſt or Power committed to them, by falſifying of which they raiſe themſelves, or to carry on cloſe unjuſt Practiſes. There have been too many Examples of thoſe who lift up their hands in the Sanctuary, and ſeemingly praiſe the Lord, *Whoſe right hand is a right hand of Falſehood.* Who appear to ſanctifie the Lords Day, but practiſe Deceit and Guile all the Week long. So univerſal hath been the Corruption this way, that conſidering People will moſt ſuſpect them, who are Godly. But there are more Knaves to be found amongſt the wicked and prophane then Hypocrites. Indeed thoſe remain longer undiſcovered, for theſe have the Eyes of all faſtened on them, who mark their ſteps, and are glad to find out ſuch a great fault in what hath a reſemblance to Goodneſs, and many times it is a falſe imputation of wrong Charged on ſuch, who neither did, nor intended any. But in this corrupt World, innumerable are the Tricks and Devices (ſinful or not is no Conſideration, or no hindrance) to get Money: Men go to and fro, from this place to that, Buy and Sell all to this purpoſe, as if it was the principal end for which they were Created. *A faithful Man ſhall abound with Bleſſings, but he that maketh haſt to be Rich ſhall not be innocent*, Prov. 28. 20.

There is no need to leave of the buſineſs of ones Calling, or ſinful Gain, becauſe ſome have thus abuſed it, for this would be ridiculous as to neglect Eating and Drinking, becauſe ſome turn

that into Gluttony and Drunkenneſs. Nor is he obliged when he hath juſt got a Livelihood to ſtop and go no further, but may be ſtill diligent in buſineſs, expecting the *bleſſing of the Lord which maketh Rich, and addeth no ſorrow with it*, Prov. 10. 22. *Truſt not in Oppreſſion, become not vain in Robbery: If Riches increaſe, ſet not your heart upon them*, Pſal. 62. 10. They are a ſtrong Temptation, whereby many unſtable Souls have been deluded and left their firſt Love; but when the deſire is taken of, they may be purſued with a kind of indifferency. Having this reſolution ever firm, that no Profit ſhall move us to part with our Integrity, nor to offend Chriſt, if the whole World were to be gained. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart, and ye ſhall find Reſt unto your Souls*, Mat. 11. 29. We ſhould neither love abundance, nor eagerly hunt after increaſe if we were humble, for then it would be no Pleaſure to boaſt in the multitude of Riches, or be lifted up, which is the principal Reaſon why they are deſired. Take away Pride, and Covetouſneſs will ceaſe; for however the wretched Miſer creepeth that the ſpoyl may fall into his hands, however ſpeaking and ſtudious to pleaſe his Superiors, if he may get by them, yet he is naturally proud and eſteemeth himſelf above others, according to the Pelf he hath. But if we had right Thoughts of our ſelves, (for all thoſe are without, and nothing of the Man) we ſhould not be puffed up with great Eſtates, fine Apparel, or Aiery Titles of Honour. *By humility and fear of the Lord, are Riches, Honour and Life*, Prov. 22. 4. The inheritance in Heaven ſwallows up the Conceit of that here. *Be clothed with Humility*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. this takes of that earneſt Affectation of Gorgeous and ſoft raiment. *The Honour that comes from God only*, John 5. 44. makes all great Titles and flattering Expreſſions not valued. Who believes, and goes the real way to obtain theſe things, receives but little Satisfaction from what the Men of this World think their greateſt Happineſs. His deſires are ſpiritualized, ſo they are not carried after ſenſual Pleaſures.

To Labour to Eat, and to Eat to Live, and to Live to Labour is no end; (though many poor Souls are willingly ignorant and unmindful of any thing more) but it is to ſerve and obey God, to continue for ſome time according to his Ordinance, and all is towards the eternal Reſt, Life and Happineſs. And therefore all along every thing is to be done to attain that; and

thoſe

thoſe things to be refrained from, which may endanger, leaſt any one ſhould come ſhort of it. The affections may, and are to be ſet on the things above, even whilſt he takes pains for things here, they are neceſſary and convenient for our Pilgrimage, through this place to *Jeruſalem*, which is the Mother of us all; but ſtill theſe are tranſitory goods, when there is the enduring ſubſtance. What is ſo hardly ingrafted into the minds of ſome people, is eaſie to be underſtood; The covetous Worldly Man knows what he labours for is current Money; and why doth he think that ſhould tarry with him, which hath already paſſed through ſo many hands before it came to his? but now he fancies to keep it, in vain, for (beſides loſs and caſualty, which often convinces it is not in his own power) if they do not ſlip from him, he muſt be taken from them; for when he dieth he ſhall carry nothing away, *Pſ.* 49. 17. If it could be done, it would be a ſenceleſs thing to carry a little Gold that periſheth to (where we all hope to go) the City that is pure Gold, *Rev.* 21. 18. The yellow duſt here, which ſeems ſo glittering and deſirable, is dim and droſs in compariſon of that.

But for all that can be ſaid; a diſregard and little value for Riches ſeems an idle ſpeculation, for who hath it? That argues their want of Faith and Reaſon, or Fooliſhneſs in not living according to them. Chriſtianity is to be judged of by its precepts and true examples, and not to be meaſured by thoſe who do not comply therewith. The bleſſed Jeſus had a Purſe-bearer for the poor, but we do not read that he had any thing more then to ſerve neceſſary occaſions; when they came to him for one Penny Tribute-Money, he works a Miracle to have that; and never is Recorded to have ſought any at all but at that time. *Peter* was not aſhamed to own openly, *Silver and Gold I have none*, Acts 3. 6. The other Apoſtles were in a like condition: Thoſe whom they Converted unto the Faith, had all things common, and ſold their Poſſeſſions and Goods, and parted them to all Men, as every Man had need, *Acts* 2. 44, 45. They did deſpiſe what the World now doth magnifie; yet we pretend to follow the ſteps our fore-runner, and they are gone before; *But care is to be had that we do not miſs of the place they are entred into, as we now vary from what they were in this World.* The young Man who had kept all God's Commandments from his youth upward, was rejected becauſe he would not go and ſell that which he had, and give to Mat. 14.

the poor, when he was promiſed to have Treaſure in Heaven; and it is immediately added of the hardneſs of a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God; from whence may be gathered, that to prefer any profit before the Commandments of Jeſus, If there is not a readineſs, willingneſs, nay actual doing the ſame when occaſion requires to loſe or ſell all worldly poſſeſſions for his ſake and poor Brethren; if this mind be wanting, all ſignifies nothing, though he hath done never ſo many good actions before. To come ſo near to Heaven, and not be admitted for want of one thing, makes the diſappointment worſe and more tormenting. Although many having the form of Godlineſs do love this preſent World, yet none doth ſo who is a ſincere and univerſal Chriſtian, as one muſt be, if he intends to find Good by his Profeſſion.

Luke 14. 33.

But the natural Man diſcerneth not theſe things, they are fooliſhneſs unto him; and therefore it would be proper to ſpeak ſomewhat, whereof he is ſenſible. Perhaps he imagineth all the reſt to be talk, as now he begins to perceive what is done to be Vanity, a Dream, and next to nothing. However formerly he did hunt after what he thought was real, now he diſcovers it to be empty and vain, and therefore concludes the like of what is more told him. Not throughly conſidering this is a ſtrong evidence of the truth of God's Word, which before acquainted, as he did hear ſomewhat of the Vanity, Deceitfulneſs, Unfruitfulneſs of thoſe things; And then he would not believe, but now that is found true by his own experience. Why then may it not be ſuppoſed to be true, when it ſpeaks further of the continuance, greatneſs, and ſubſtance of things hoped for? If it is fulfilled in the leſs, why ſhall it not alſo be in the greater? If in things preſent, why not in things to come? *If I have told you Earthly things, and ye believe not, how ſhall ye believe if I tell you of Heavenly things?* John 3.12. But it is experienced by all what the Word ſpeaks of the fiction and falſhood of ſome things, ſo it is reaſonable to give regard when it declares the truth and reality of others. It is to be feared, and he is in time to be forewarned thereof, leaſt he be found a Fool in this as in former things, to know them only by after wit and experience. As he diſcerns not the Vanity and Deluſion of Youth, till that is over; ſo not to learn the things proper for a Man till that is paſt, nor the things of eternity till he is let into it, which is ſad; for an error here is without remedy. It is

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fooliſhneſs in an old Man to ſay, O that I had done thus, and thus in times of Youth or Manhood, when he might have done them then, and now they are paſt and irrecoverable. It is juſt the very ſame as to thoſe things alſo, unto which through the Grace of God we endeavour to perſwade Men. And therefore ſuffer your ſelves to be put in mind, you are come to perfect underſtanding, judge of what is ſaid.

It is a deceivable and lying conſequence, (with which the Devil doth tempt people to unbelief towards their declining years) that all things whatever are Vanity, becauſe they find it ſo of the things before them. Every temptation, if throughly conſidered, makes againſt him; for this confirms that all things indeed are ſo as affirmed in Scripture. So they are not to be taken up as a reſerve, but to be ſurely believed; they are not to be looked upon as conjectural notions of happineſs, but to be moſt faithful and true, worthy to be truſted unto, if we had ten thouſand lives to be ventured upon them, or ſo much hope and deſire proportionable to them. The inſpiration of God makes known the deceitfulneſs of all fanſied good here. That ſpeaks of every thing according to its very nature (either in expreſs words, or juſt conſequence) which belong to mankind from the greateſt to the leaſt, except what may be known from our ſelves, and the moſt common obſervation. The more we know of the things of this World, we leſs eſteem them; and thence it is that we every day more diſreliſh ſenſuſual pleaſures, for they tire and the ſame hath been had before; life grow tedious and irkſome, for the ſame returns over and over again, and it is not ſatisfactory. Even good fellowſhip is every day leſs admired, and people grow more ſelfiſh and ſhut up within themſelves. As for Money, the Heathen *Cicero* did reckon Covetouſneſs in old Men an unaccountable thing, to get the more proviſion, the leſs journey they have to go; but he did not ſo fully think of, that this was cleaved unto as (in the Prophets phraſe) *the refuge of lies*, Iſa. 28. 17. the laſt of all Vanities. Mens affections muſt be carried after ſomething, and where they apprehend all to be ſo; they fix upon that which is only more ſubſtantial, becauſe they ſuppoſe leſs ſubject to Vanity; but even here after they have laboured for it, they are not ſatisfied. When in any pain or trouble, or towards the cloſe of their days, to reflect upon their Gold and Silver will not yield the leaſt comfort, it will rather enhance preſent

Miſery

misery because that cannot ease them in time of need, which they have faithfully served all their life before. It would be sad if amidst so much Evil and Vanity, such lies and delusion, there was nothing to be found good and real, truth and certainty. But there is, *The Grass withereth, the Flower fadeth, but the Word of God shall stand for ever*, Isa. 40. 8. That (as aforementioned) speaketh exactly of all things as they are, which is a demonstration, that what it saith further is true. And then the work of righteousness is real and eternal.

Exhortation. To you of full Age the Word of Exhortation comes.

Be not afraid to be happy here and hereafter: Do not with regret flee from the wrath to come, you are now warned. *And* Rom. 13. *that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our Salvation nearer then when we believed.* You are nearer to Death and Immortality then ever you were yet, *The night is far spent, the day is at hand.* A great deal of your life is gone, and your dying day approacheth. You are called upon to leave of your sins and disobedience, least they deliver you over to the damnation of Hell. Will you not endeavour to avoid that, who will do any thing to shun a temporal calamity? You are not (but God knows how soon you may, if you continue in an hard impenitent heart) cast down into the everlasting Dungeon, the place of utter Darkness. Is it irksome to read these lines? It will be much more intolerable to suffer the truth of them, and they are only laid before you, that you may be put in mind, and so escape. The Father of Spirits calls upon you, *Turn and live, for why will you die?* God would have you all to be saved, you are adjured in his name to leave of walking in the way to destruction, despise not his loving invitation. *O that my people had hearkened unto me, and* Israel *had walked in my ways*, Ps. 81. 13. When they are rebellious and disobedient, it goes against him to punish them. *How shall I give thee up* Ephraim? *How shall I deliver thee* Israel? *How shall I make thee as* Admah, *my heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together*, Hos. 11. 8. This same God, who is here described, as if he did earn with bowels of Compassion; yet if People set at naught his Counsel, and will have none of his Reproof, he speaks to them in another manner. *When your fear cometh as desolation, when Destruction and Anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me,*

Prov.

Prov. 1. 27, 28. *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your Hearts,* Heb. 3. 7, 8. Is he not worthy of a preſent Anſwer? All People muſt grant that, but the Thoughts of ſome in the depth of their Heart are: It is no matter now, for his buſineſs may be as well done at another time, the longer it is ſtaved of, ſo much the better, for then there will be the leſs time to ſerve him, and if they can ſo much as to get Heaven, it is ſoon enough. Are theſe the ſecret Imaginations, which ſome keep ſo cloſe to themſelves? But they do not in the mean while throughly conſider how, *all things are naked and opened unto the Eyes of him, with whom we have to do,* Heb. 4. 13. ſo he knoweth theſe innermoſt Thoughts all one, as if they were wrote legibly upon the Forehead of thoſe who conceive them. How diſingenuous is this? And will he not ſo judge of it? As if he muſt have thoſe things put on him, which they would not ſuffer from their Servants. For would they like thoſe who will do juſt enough to receive Wages, but no more, and leſs if they could? Can it be reaſonably expected, God will reward thoſe baſe and Mercenary People, who do not eſteem of him, but only the good things he hath prepared? Who would willingly receive his Gifts, but have neither Love nor Reverence for the Giver. If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments, ſaid he, who is to judge every Mans work. What thoſe are, himſelf hath likewiſe told us, they are two, The firſt is, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy mind, and all thy Strength.* How can he do this, who hath ſuch unworthy Thoughts? Such an one, unleſs he repents of the Evil, will never be judged a Lover of God, and then notwithſtanding all his Policy he may come ſhort of his Expectation. God doth confound the Wiſdom of the Wiſe, and taketh them in their Craftineſs. Thoſe which fancy, and propoſe to themſelves ſome new fine and eaſie way to Heaven of their own invention, it is a thouſand to one but they periſh in their Projects, for Men muſt not think any way to avoid the force and obligation of Gods Commandments. Indeed they may chooſe whether they will obſerve them or not; but then they muſt not chooſe to themſelves the reward that is promiſed for keepingof them. Neither let them imagine to draw up new Articles of Agreement, beſides that Covenant of Grace, God hath been pleaſed to eſtabliſh with Man, for that is only of his own

making

making, and it is merciful enough; it is not come to ſuch Familiarity, that he ſhould accept what ſinful Creatures would give him. It is moſt juſt, that God who made us without our ſelves, never asked our Advice, whether we ſhould be formed Veſſels to Honour or Diſhonour, ſhould alſo give us what Laws he pleaſe, making his own Terms and Conditions, upon which we are to receive the Happineſs, whereof himſelf is the only Giver. We are not to frame any out of our own Brain, and offer them unto him; for ſeeing he hath created us to ſerve him, ſhewed us how, lent us Life for a time to do it, We are not to ſeek out new Devices, or to Parcel out this time as we ſee beſt for doing there of. This is here mentioned, that thoſe may beware who think it ſufficient if they allot the leaſt Portion, nay the laſt moment for doing that wherefore the whole was given them. *Theſe are the Statutes and Judgments, which ye ſhall obſerve to do all the days ye live upon the Earth*, Deut. 12. 1. which is not taken away, but rather more confirmed under the Goſpel, as appears from, *Luk.* 1. 75. Who then would be ſaved? We learn from the Prodigal Son, the Publicans and Sinners, the joy over them that repent, those many gracious Texts concerning it, that if we do go aſtray and come home again, we ſhall be received to Grace and Favour. But if Men from hence take occaſion to ſpend their days in wickedneſs, and their Life in diſobedience; if they turn the Grace of God into wantonneſs, it is an horrible abuſe, and who thus pervert the ways of the moſt High, may notwithſtanding their vain purpoſes periſh for ever. If they go on in their wicked Courſe they may unawares be given over to a reprobate mind, and all their Thoughts whereby they intended to be reconciled unto God at ſuch a time, come to nothing. It is both unworthy and ſinful to put him of from day to day; and he who doth not Love to be mocked or deſpiſed, may reward ſuch after their deſervings, withdraw his Grace, and let them go on in their own imaginations. What if one ſhould come into the Vineyard a little ſooner then needs muſt? Is not Heaven worth Labouring all the day for? And can too much be done to avoid Hell? Is it not better in a thing of ſo great moment to come more early, and *to wait for your Lord, that when he cometh and knocketh, you may open immediately*, Luke 12. 36. then to tarry till the Critical time of his coming, for you know not when this will be? Who knoweth, *That certain day that is limited after*

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ſo long a time? Heb. 4. 7. Who can tell exactly how far, and how long he may go in the way of wickedneſs, and return? The utmoſt bounds are not ſet down, But this we are aſſured of, the further we go, the more way is to come back, which will require ſo much the more Labour and Pains. Haſt thou any degree of the Love of God? Wouldſt thou not trifle with him? Doſt thou ſeriouſly expect to inherit his Promiſes and avoid his Threatnings? Haſt thou any regard to the eternal Welfare or Miſery of thy own dear ſelf? Art thou ſo Wiſe as not to hazard (when there is no need) ſuch an exceeding good ſet before thee, and on the other hand ſo great an evil? Break of preſently thy Sins by Repentance. Turn you, Turn you, and then Iniquity ſhall not be your ruin.

That ye put off concerning the former Converſation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Luſts: And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, Eph. 4. 23, 24. Then the Fruits of the Spirit recited, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. and other practical Duties are as agreeable to our Nature, as before the Works of the Fleſh were. When men are transformed by the renewing of the mind, they prove what is that Good, that acceptable, and perfect Will of God. It ſeems ſo even to their real Senſe and Diſpoſition; they find more Comfort and Happineſs in what is good, then formerly they did in evil. Be not doubtful or ſuſpicious; you are in no wiſe required to go ſoftly all your years in the Bitterneſs of your Soul: But you are invited forth to what *Is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her*, Prov. 3. 18.

As thoſe can further aſſure you out of their own experience, who ſought her early; Who being partakers of the Divine Nature, take more delight in the things of God then others do in the things of the World. Who by continuance in well-doing have a Bleſſed Habit thereof, ſo it is become familiar and pleaſing as any other Courſe of Life. Their love preſerves them from committing of evil; and though this being hot at firſt, did cool again, yet they have uſed all means to renew it, *To keep the Fire upon the Altar always burning*, Lev. 6. 3. If the flame do not continue ſo brisk, as at firſt kindling, yet they have taken all imaginable Care that it ſhall never go out. It cannot be expected one ſhould be continually raviſht with a pleaſant Countrey

as at first sight thereof; the longer we live and only behold the Works of Creation, it takes away that just Wonder and Astonishment. And so it is of the invisible things of God, we are not always so transported as at first hearing of them, when they were New and exceeding Great; they are the very same still, but the defect is in our selves, our Ears are dull of hearing and remain unconcerned. There may be a Gracious and Wise disposal in this, that *ye should shew forth the Praises of him, who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. These youthly fervours of Spirit, that joy because of the sudden Alteration, that taste of precious things, that lively Faith in what is unutterable, how much did they exceed the little Vanities of the natural State? And when all these do flag and become less affecting even to the end of our Lives, it may be a short Emblem given us to signifie, that when we shall be let into the Enjoyment and Possession, they will be infinitely more surprising. And we shall be amazed within our selves how it came to pass, we should have the less Sense, the nearer we did approach to them. They will be found to be so much beyond then was possible to enter into the Heart to conceive of them. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear: but now mine Eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes*, Job. 42. 5, 6. Which then was so great, that there wants a word to set it forth, and this should be fully assented to as true, yet to lessen the inward Estimation thereof; the nearer we draw to it more unmindful, careless and negligent must be a condemning thought to the Souls in Heaven, that ever they should come thither with Faintness and Weariness of mind, that their steps should well nigh slip, or think of going backwards. By which perhaps they have lost such Degrees of Glory and a greater reward. They will be vexed that they did not more whilst here in the World. But it will be inexpressible Anguish to all Apostates, who forsake their first love. A Lesson of instruction to us now in the way, things are so ordered to see if we will do what the Prophet complains for want of, *There is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of God*, Isa. 64. 7. Which is to be done by constant frequenting the Ordinances, hearing the Word, Prayer and Sacrament, Holy Meditation, edifying Discourse, Watchful avoiding the occasions of evil and other hindrances: And also doing good Works. In all things put forth the utmost

Strength

Strength and Vigour, get that Chain of Graces, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5,6,7. *And if theſe things be in you, and abound,* (there is great Emphaſis in that word full meaſure, and running over) *they make you that ye ſhall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* They that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their Strength; They ſhall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they ſhall run and not be weary, and they ſhall walk and not faint, *Iſa.* 40. 31. They muſt continue in all means of Grace and Duty, even from the Child to the Ancient of days as long as they are in this Earth, for this is the place of Faith and Waiting, otherwiſe this bleſſed Promiſe doth not belong to them. All that you have hitherto done ſignifieth nothing, unleſs you ſtill preſs forward to the mark of the High Calling in Chriſt Jeſus. And ye have hitherto run well; what ſhould hinder, but that you ſhould obtain? You have paſt over the Corruption through the Giddineſs and unrulineſs of Youth, have eſcaped the Dangers of that ſhallow violent Age, in which ſo many have ſplit and been carried away with the ſwift Streams of Luſt, running down into the dead Sea, before ever they conſidered well where they were going. But you are ſafely arrived into the *Mediterranean* of this Life, and your Voyage now is ſafe, pleaſant and eaſie. You will quickly be at the deſired Countrey, if you do take diligent Care. Behold now is your Salvation nearer then when we dreamed, and in a little while it will be before you. Wherefore lift up your feeble knees, and your hands that hang down; uſe ſtill your utmoſt endeavours, and the great Pilot above will not leave you nor forſake you. If you be not wanting to your ſelves, he will not be behind in making good his Promiſes. Go on ſtill as you have begun. *Watch ye, ſtand faſt in the Faith, quit you like men, be ſtrong,* 1 Cor. 16. 13. *Exhorting one another, and ſo much the more, as you ſee the day approaching,* Heb. 10 25.

Of Old Age.

The day when the Keepers of the Houſe ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves, and the Grinders ceaſe becauſe they are few, and thoſe that look out of the Windows be darkned, Eccleſ. 12. 3. This is the fourth, and laſt Period of Mans Life. Old Age is Gods Bleſſing, which he beſtowed on his Servants before, and under the Law, as the Fathers before the Flood, *Abraham, Iſaac* and *Jacob.* The Spirit of God ſaith by *Solomon, My Son forget not my Law, but let thine Heart keep my Commandments, for length of*

Days, and long Life, and Peace ſhall they add unto thee, Prov. 3. 1, 2. But we, who are under the Goſpel, and not Carnal Ordinances, muſt not ſo much relie on Temporal Promiſes as the *Jews* did; Yet the Apoſtle ſeems to intimate, *Eph.* 6. 2, 3. that of long Life extends to *Chriſtians* alſo. We are enjoyned Temperance, moderate Labour, and Action, which naturally conduce towards it; and on the contrary, ſeveral come ſhort by the Sins of uncleanneſs, Gluttony, Drunkenneſs, Revenge, Sloth and ſuch like. God doth indeed take away at ſeveral Times and Seaſons out of the good Pleaſure of his Will, but ſtill many haſten Death unto themſelves, through their own Sin and Folly. He that taketh heed of thoſe things prolongeth his Life; and if it be cut off through any other Sickneſs or Accident, this is his comfort and aſſurance, that it was not through his own Fault. The humble Chriſtian never thinks himſelf ſufficiently prepared, and therefore deſires a long ſpace of Repentance and making ready. Nor will he preſume to ruſh forward, and boldly meet his God before he is ſent for, he thinks it Duty to wait till he is called. He being but a Potſherd of the Earth, dares not be thus rude with his Maker, as to go before, for this would be the way to be excluded from his Preſence for evermore. We are to uſe all honeſt Care to preſerve our Life as long as we can, for Death is no ſuch trivial thing, as ſome ſeem to make of it through ignorance and unmindfulneſs. The Servant of God hath no reaſon to fear, for unto him it is an entrance into a Bleſſed Eternity, yet he would be rightly provided. What is to be done but once, all Wiſdom and Caution are to be had, that it be done well and ſure. *If by any means I might attain unto the Reſurrection of the Dead, not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect*, Phil. 3. 11, 12. Or if that were done yet, he is to tarry the Lords leiſure. What if he hath ſtood without his Fathers Houſe the Spring, Summer and Autumn? yet there was no great Hardſhip in them; if there was, it ſignifies not now, it is all paſt and gone. The worſt is behind, the Winter, (and that may be ſhortned, none knoweth how ſoon) but for the preſent it is ſomewhat irkſome to endure the Froſt and Cold, to have our head Hoary and our joynts Tremble. This doth make him more deſire, Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly; and it will be a greater happineſs when he doth come, but in the mean while he is not angry if not heard, ſee *Heb.* 10. 36, 37, 38. If the body be waxed Old, the

Mind

Mind ſuffers no decay; the Seed ſown in Spring, cultivated in the time of ſtrength, yields a plentiful Crop, which doth good ſervice in this time of need. *They ſhall ſtill bring forth Fruit in old Age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing, to ſhew that the Lord is upright*, Pſal. 92. 14, 15. The flower falleth, and the beauty thereof is vaniſhed before the Fruit come, but this is better: So it is of the flouriſhing and lovelineſs of Youth, that is gone before good and worthy Actions are performed; but when they are done, the remembrance of them, and a well ſpent life is a mighty comfort to fading and decrepit years. If he cannnot now enjoy the pleaſures of the World, that can be no vexation unto him whoſe mind is fixed upon better Objects, God and Chriſt. He being throughly convinced both by reaſon and experience of the vanity of all things here below, doth indeed pity, and not the leaſt envy thoſe who greedily hunt after them. Having the Wiſdom from above which is gentle, and eaſie to be entreated, he hath no peeviſhneſs of humour, and therefore he is not wearieſome nor hated like others of the ſame age. The Grace of God changes the whole nature, much more a ſingle circumſtance thereof. He is not in continual dread of the approach of Death, for that is the thing expected and deſired. The ſting of it is ſin, but he hath made it his buſineſs throughout his life paſt to pluck that out, now he can lie down in peace, knowing aſſuredly that day (which others ſo much fear) will be unto him the Birth-day of Immortality. Neither is he afraid to conſider thereof beforehand, for it doth not appear terrible to him who is reconciled with God, and hath laid up a Foundation, by good Works which are ready to follow him. Having cleaved unto God in life and health he will not caſt him away in time of Age, nor forſake him when his ſtrength faileth. He that is his God will be his Guide unto Death; with this firm aſſurance he is bleſſed.

But the ſinner being an hundred Years Old ſhall be accurſed, Iſa. 65. 20. and therefore is extreamly afraid to receive it. That ſtudied unmindfulneſs of his latter end, when Death dogs him at the heels, and is ready to gnaw on him, yet he puts of the looking thereon, and thence fooliſhly thinks all is well enough. An horrible dread and fearful expectation hovers over him, which he drives away as long as he can; ſome make a ſhew off much Mirth and Briskneſs, all for pleaſure and company ſtill; this is but a forced Joviality. However they pretend to have a Youthful

ſul mind in a withered Body, in vain Paſtimes to skip like young Lambs, this they are the more obliged unto for to ſtifle inward Sorrow and fear. It is an eaſie matter, eſpecially by aid of Company and Senſuality, to make an outward appearance of what is contrary within, to laugh or make a noiſe when there is Vexation of Spirit. 'Tis not only Age nor Conſtitution (whatever worldly and unbelievers talk) is the cauſe of Miſery, but it is principally occaſioned by Sin and Guilt, which others again are freed from by Innocency and Goſpel Righteouſneſs. Some are ſuch deceivers of themſelves, that they will rather think any thing a cauſe of trouble then their ſins. *The way of the wicked is as Darkneſs, they know not at what they ſtumble*, Prov. 4.19. Natural weakneſs is common to all, as to which they are tormented and others comforted; but they are further ſubject to horrour and miſery, from which the Righteous are altogether freed: If the eyes of the ungodly are waxed dim, ſo that they cannot longer behold vanity, it is grievous to be bereaved of what they placed good in, eſpecially there being no Light within them, but their body is full of Darkneſs. If they are not able to fulfill their luſts, (in which was their chiefeſt delight) how wretched muſt they be? When the affection and deſire towards them doth ſtill remain, but the Members and Sences have loſt their power and reliſh. Thoſe which knew no other Happineſs but outward ſenſual pleaſures, and they have yet an hankering; what ſhall be done when thoſe are vaniſhed, and they have no other comfort or ſatisfaction inſtead thereof? They wiſh they had never been; Life is a burthen, which they would ſurrender up preſently, if they could be certain the Spirit would turn into ſoft air, and the body ever remain inſenſible as the Earth out of which it was taken, but they ſadly fear it will be otherwiſe. The oldeſt men if remaining in Irreligion and Wickedneſs, ſtill do deſire and endeavour after a further continuance of their life, though it be a ſucceſſion of miſeries linked one upon another, and they have ſucked out, even to loathing, all Worldly pleaſures, and now cannot enjoy them. They are weary of life, and afraid to die, for they expect no good from it but evil That puniſhment which attends for them till out of the body frightens when they are in, and the remedy they uſe, is not to think thereof. If they caſt a tranſient glance towards the Grave, as ſometimes they are forced, they do not look beyond unto Eternity and future Judgment, for that

raiſes

raiſes trouble and anguiſh of mind. There is an inward apprehenſion (which hath been ſtifled as much as it could) they are indeed afraid to appear before that God whom they have provoked and offended throughout their foregoing days. This they were warned of all along by Gods Word and Miniſters, their own Conicience, but having continually reſiſted them all, theſe Scriptures are fulfilled in them, *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. & 29. 10, 11. *Rom.* 1. 24, 26,28. Talk to an old Man (who hath hitherto lived in diſobedience, and never left his luſts till they left him) concerning Religion and exhort him to repent, it is the ſame as if you did to a bruit Beaſt. His ear is deaf and ſtupid to thoſe things, he underſtands as little of them as a Child. *Strangers have devoured his ſtrength, and he knoweth it not, yea, gray Hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not*, Hoſ. 7. 9.

There hath been ſome exhortation uſed to thoſe in the ſtate of Manhood, for if they are unconverted, they have the ſpirit of ſlumber, ſo they are more eaſily awakened; but the ſpirit of deep ſleep is poured out upon old hardened Sinners, and it is to be feared ſome of them will not be throughly rouzed, till they feel the flames of Hell about their Ears. This Age is not uſually bettered by reproof: Who are unjuſt will be unjuſt ſtill, and who are filthy will be filthy ſtill. However they may know, otherwiſe they ſhall feel, that *God ſhall wound the head of his Enemies, and the Hairy ſcalp of ſuch an one as goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſſes*, Pſ. 68. 21. Let all people take heed how they put off their turning unto the Lord till this time, for it is an unworthy thing after the body hath ſerved divers luſts and pleaſures, and worn out in them, and diſabled any longer, then to offer it up unto him. Is it then a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God? Is this a reaſonable ſervice? No, he diſowns the Blind, the Lame and Sick for Sacrifice, *Mal.* 1. 8. Is it meet that the Church of God ſhould be like the pool of *Bethesda* to be frequented by a number of impotent Folks, of Blind, Halt, and Withered. Neither let any preſume too much on thoſe who were called at the eleventh hour into the Vineyard, but the reaſon is there given, they were not hired before, and they came as ſoon as called. But here in a Chriſtian Country, all are called to ſerve the Lord in their Youth; if they refuſe becauſe they think the day too long, and they fancy it well enough, if they go a little before Sun ſetting; will the great Houſholder thank them for it, and ſo be impoſed upon? In

no

no wiſe, for which of you will be ſo ſerved? If your own workmen ſhould not come, or loyter all the day and do nothing till the time they ſhould leave of Work, would you reward ſuch baſe and negligent Fellows who thus deſpiſe and put a trick on you? God will be no more mocked or ſlighted by his Creatures, then they will be by thoſe under them. He is jealous of his Honour, and hates to have his commands diſregarded; with him is Power, Sovereignty and Wiſdom: Men muſt not think to give him an anſwer when they will, at ſome time hereafter, for now they have other buſineſs to do, or with *Felix* put him off to a more convenient ſeaſon. Let them deal thus with their Prince, and ſee how he will reſent it. God is not beholden to the Work of his hands, neither doth he receive any benefit by them; it is alone his infinite Goodneſs and Love, that he makes unto us any offer of Happineſs, and not our deſert who do all we can to provoke the Author of our being. *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins*, Pſal. 103. 10. He commands to turn from them and be healed; it is meet and right (the diſtance being infinite of him over us) to anſwer him at the firſt call, which he doth again, and waits that he may be gracious, but he doth not for ever. *Pharoahs* heart was hardened after he had refuſed Gods meſſage ten times; and there are but few old Men in this Nation, who have hitherto continued in an unregenerate condition, but have more often reſiſted Gods Ambaſſadors commanding them in his name to turn and live, and therefore equally deſerve hardneſs of heart. But God who can raiſe the Dead, can raiſe theſe alſo out of the Lethargy and Death of ſin; he can pluck theſe *brands out of the Fire*, Zech. 32. Yet there being ſo few ſincere and hearty converts of this nature; Oh my Soul, truſt not thou upon ſuch uncertainties, to day while it is called to day harden not thy heart, but hearken unto Gods Voice; forſake thy ſins immediately, and then thou art ſure. Defer not till old Age to be juſtified, for then a thouſand to one if ever thou be.

The hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs, Prov. 16. 31. It hath a reſemblance to the Antient of Days, and is a ſign of that Eternity God ſhall endue him withal; *ſo. the time is at hand, let him that is Righteous be Righteous ſtill*, Rev. 22. 10, 11. Let your Loines be girded about, and your Lights burning, for the Bridegroom is near, go ye out to Meet him that you go in with him to the Marriage; be thou faith-

faithfull unto Death and I will give thee a Crown of Life.

Thus have we run through all the Ages of Man, which are visible in the increaſe, change and alteration they make in his body. Let none flatter himſelf as if he ſhould certainly paſs through them all, nor defer the doing of thoſe things which ought to be done preſently; for we are not ſure of a Day or a Week forward. For beſides the many inſtances of ſudden Death; Sickneſs is moſt commonly ſo, which in three or four days may hurry us hence to give Account for the Deeds done in the Body; ſo uncertain a thing is life, that by outward appearance none knows whither it will be long or ſhort. The breath in our Noſtrils hangs upon ſuch ſlender threads from within, and is ſubject to ſo many Caſualties from without, that if it were not for Gods providence who holds our Souls in life, we ſhould rather admire that any live ſo long, as die ſo ſoon. Upon this frail thing depends our everlaſting Happineſs or Miſery, it being the ſpace to try how we will behave our ſelves towards God, and accordingly we are to receive from him. *Behold thou haſt made my Days as an hand breadth, and mine Age is nothing before Thee*, Pſ. 39. 5. By reaſon of the Evil and Vanity (which encloſe us on every ſide) it is irkſom and tedious, which makes it ſeem ſomewhat longer; but when our days are paſſed away they are the ſame, *as a tale that is told*, Pſ. 90. 3. So it appears upon a Death-bed, yea, in the time of Health and Vigour, the Years that are paſt may be all meaſured in a thought, and the ſame as if they had not been. How ſoon is the Morning of Youth over? How is our Face changed, as if we were not the ſame Men? What was ruddy and flouriſhing, begins to wither like the Graſs. The body hath been, is ſtill changing, and never continues in one ſtay; *We dwell in Houſes of Clay, whoſe Foundation is in the Duſt*, Job 4. 19. It continually tends whence it was taken; the matter is heavy and weak in its own Nature, and yet we, as if born for no other end, but to make our ſelves Miſerable, will render them worſe, by giving too much way to brutiſh appeties they become unactive and dull. We naturally groan in this Tabernacle, it depreſſing the Heavenly aſpiring Soul, yet by ſenſuality ſink it even lower unto the Earth. As if the ſeeds of Corruption did not ſufficiently trouble us, we throw in more by Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and by going over to ſtrange luſts, conſume our ſtrength.

Of the Body, Senſes, and ſenſual Pleaſure.

If God did not take more care for us then our ſelves do, we ſhould be the moſt Miſerable of all his Creatures. To prevent theſe inconveniencies are the commands and directions in his good Word, *Rom.* 12. 1. 1 *Cor.* v. 15. *Rom.* 6. 13. 19. 1 *Cor.* 3. 17. 1 Theſ. 4 3, 4. 1 Theſ. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Luk. 21. 34.

Of Pleaſure.

We ſhould not only eſcape the Evils, but as to the body might enjoy good things, which indeed are little, but proportionable to its ſmall and periſhing nature; for labour it hath refreſhment and ſleep: And further are ſome pleaſures, which God hath provided for every ſence; the Eye is pleaſed with variety of Works, the Pious Soul takes great delight in beholding the Moon and Stars which he hath Ordained, and by the Beauty of the Creatures is to be ſeen the greater excellency of the Creator. If it be pleaſant now to ſee them through a glaſs darkly, it will be much more hereafter to ſee clearly God as he is, face to face. The ear is delighted with Singing Pſalms and Praiſe, and the ſeveral kinds of Muſick. The Palate is refreſhed with the ſavour of Meat and Drink, God hath given liberty to the uſe of Man, by which we may Taſt and ſee that the Lord is good, *Pſ.* 33. 8. The ſmell is gratified with Flowers, Balm and Spiknard; another ſence hath alſo ſome delight anſwerable to it.

But here Men are to be Advertiſed, that ſenſual pleaſures were allowed juſt to refreſh us, and thereby alſo to try our obedience, for ſeveral Commandments are againſt the exceſs of them. When too greedily had, they prove a tranſgreſſion, and alſo an hindrance to the things of the Spirit being contrary to them. Theſe too often thruſt out the other, making a ſhew of more happineſs, and therefore let it be examined whither they will really yield ſo much as they pretend, conſidering them in their ſin and abuſe with the utmoſt delight that doth arrive from them; *The pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, Heb. 11. 25. So ſtiled by the Apoſtle, becauſe they endure no longer then this life, and alſo they are only for that Moment in which they are had. The pleaſantneſs of Meat and Drink vaniſheth in the Mouth, and the delights of Luſt are ſooner gone then well perceived; ſenſual enjoyments paſs by, and are the ſame immediately after as if they had never been. In the very midſt the heart is not ſatisfied, for they pleaſe one half of us, the worſe part, but not the whole Man. The Soul is unconcerned; and though by much indulging ſenſual pleaſures the under-

underſtanding waxes groſs, ſo it cannot reliſh what are proper to that, being brutiſh in its imaginations; nevertheleſs it cannot be ſo in its enjoyments, for the things of this life do not give a true and real contentment, to thoſe who do not live according to it, and come near the Beaſts that Periſh. Who have leaſt Reaſon or Wiſdom, are moſt Tranſported with bodily Pleaſures, yet none is ſo void thereof, as to receive a full Satisfaction from them; I appeal to the greateſt Voluptuary (if his heart be not ſo covered over with Fat, that it cannot conceive at all) Whether he doth really think himſelf to be an happy Man? Is he not of the Number of thoſe, who amidſt jovial delights rejoyce in appearance and not in heart? Doth he not ſtill deſire after ſomething elſe then what he hath already? A true ſign that he hath not Felicity, for he cannot ſhew it forth by Reſt and Peace of Mind.

There is in our Nature an earneſt deſire after Happineſs, all follow after what they imagine may bring them to it. The two Principal Roads (for there are many By-paths and little Wandrings) are goodneſs and pleaſure; that the former is the beſt and only way, is the Manifeſtation of all the foregoing and enſuing Diſcourſe: But the latter ſeems broad, and therefore entices Way-faring Men, eſpecially Fools to walk in it, *Come ye ſimple ones, and turn in hither*, and they judging only by appearance, are ſoon brought into the liking thereof. It ſeems pleaſant and ſmooth at firſt, ſo they walk on Merrily; but going on, they meet with rubs, and whereas they thought it would be more delightful, they find the contrary; they begin to be tired, and would go back into the other Way, but that did ſeem Narrow and Rough when they looked upon it at firſt, and therefore vainly and fooliſhly conclude that is worſe further on, which alſo is juſt contrary as may be ſeen, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Iſa.* 35. 8. The Devil whiſpers to them not to believe as much, for they have wearied themſelves in the way of Deſtruction, and if they knew of a better, they would walk in it; but he ſubtilly perſwades there is none better then what they are in already. They are by ſad experience ſenſible it is no good Way, but giving credit to the Father of Lies, continue therein. Men retain their ſinful Pleaſures, though Surfeited; for they cannot well live without ſome Delight, and they think Paultry and Inſignificant ones are better then none at all. A Whore at length is Nauſeated, but kept un-

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We ſhould not only eſcape the Evils, but as to the body might enjoy good things, which indeed are little, but proportionable to its ſmall and periſhing nature; for labour it hath refreſhment and ſleep: And further are ſome pleaſures, which God hath provided for every ſence; the Eye is pleaſed with variety of Works, the Pious Soul takes great delight in beholding the Moon and Stars which he hath Ordained, and by the Beauty of the Creatures is to be ſeen the greater excellency of the Creator. If it be pleaſant now to ſee them through a glaſs darkly, it will be much more hereafter to ſee clearly God as he is, face to face. The ear is delighted with Singing Pſalms and Praiſe, and the ſeveral kinds of Muſick. The Palate is refreſhed with the ſavour of Meat and Drink, God hath given liberty to the uſe of Man, by which we may Taſt and ſee that the Lord is good, *Pſ.* 33. 8. The ſmell is gratified with Flowers, Balm and Spiknard; another ſence hath alſo ſome delight anſwerable to it.

But here Men are to be Advertiſed, that ſenſual pleaſures were allowed juſt to refreſh us, and thereby alſo to try our obedience, for ſeveral Commandments are againſt the exceſs of them. When too greedily had, they prove a tranſgreſſion, and alſo an hindrance to the things of the Spirit being contrary to them. Theſe too often thruſt out the other, making a ſhew of more happineſs, and therefore let it be examined whither they will really yield ſo much as they pretend, conſidering them in their ſin and abuſe with the utmoſt delight that doth arrive from them; *The pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, Heb. 11. 25. So ſtiled by the Apoſtle, becauſe they endure no longer then this life, and alſo they are only for that Moment in which they are had. The pleaſantneſs of Meat and Drink vaniſheth in the Mouth, and the delights of Luſt are ſooner gone then well perceived; ſenſual enjoyments paſs by, and are the ſame immediately after as if they had never been. In the very midſt the heart is not ſatisfied, for they pleaſe one half of us, the worſe part, but not the whole Man. The Soul is unconcerned; and though by much indulging ſenſual pleaſures the under-

underſtanding waxes groſs, ſo it cannot reliſh what are proper to that, being brutiſh in its imaginations; nevertheleſs it cannot be ſo in its enjoyments, for the things of this life do not give a true and real contentment, to thoſe who do not live according to it, and come near the Beaſts that Periſh. Who have leaſt Reaſon or Wiſdom, are moſt Tranſported with bodily Pleaſures, yet none is ſo void thereof, as to receive a full Satisfaction from them; I appeal to the greateſt Voluptuary (if his heart be not ſo covered over with Fat, that it cannot conceive at all) Whether he doth really think himſelf to be an happy Man? Is he not of the Number of thoſe, who amidſt jovial delights rejoyce in appearance and not in heart? Doth he not ſtill deſire after ſomething elſe then what he hath already? A true ſign that he hath not Felicity, for he cannot ſhew it forth by Reſt and Peace of Mind.

There is in our Nature an earneſt deſire after Happineſs, all follow after what they imagine may bring them to it. The two Principal Roads (for there are many By-paths and little Wandrings) are goodneſs and pleaſure; that the former is the beſt and only way, is the Manifeſtation of all the foregoing and enſuing Diſcourſe: But the latter ſeems broad, and therefore entices Way-faring Men, eſpecially Fools to walk in it, *Come ye ſimple ones, and turn in hither*, and they judging only by appearance, are ſoon brought into the liking thereof. It ſeems pleaſant and ſmooth at firſt, ſo they walk on Merrily; but going on, they meet with rubs, and whereas they thought it would be more delightful, they find the contrary; they begin to be tired, and would go back into the other Way, but that did ſeem Narrow and Rough when they looked upon it at firſt, and therefore vainly and fooliſhly conclude that is worſe further on, which alſo is juſt contrary as may be ſeen, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Iſa.* 35. 8. The Devil whiſpers to them not to believe as much, for they have wearied themſelves in the way of Deſtruction, and if they knew of a better, they would walk in it; but he ſubtilly perſwades there is none better then what they are in already. They are by ſad experience ſenſible it is no good Way, but giving credit to the Father of Lies, continue therein. Men retain their ſinful Pleaſures, though Surfeited; for they cannot well live without ſome Delight, and they think Paultry and Inſignificant ones are better then none at all. A Whore at length is Nauſeated, but kept un-

to, till another Recreation is found out, of which they are wearied again, and then they ſeek a third, ſo run round in a Circle, their life being nothing but a ſtudied and ſmall variety of falſly called Pleaſures, which ſatiate but do not ſatisfie. Theſe are the *fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown Men in Deſtruction and Perdition*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. And the Rich are more given to them, as the Apoſtle here obſerves. *I beſeech you as Strangers and Pilgrims abſtain from Fleſhly luſts which War againſt the Soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. Which raiſe a Miſt before the underſtanding, making it dull and heavy, which ſtifle its Operations and hinder good exalted Thoughts, which keep the Soul more faſt in Priſon, and are directly oppoſite to her Spiritual Nature as Darkneſs to Light.

The deſign of the Goſpel is to prepare us for better things, to bring us from Earthly unto thoſe that are Heavenly. *Walk in the Spirit and ye ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the Fleſh, for the Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to another: They that are Chriſts, have crucified the Fleſh, with the affections and luſts*, Gal. 5. 16, 17, 24. *To be carnally minded is Death, but to be Spiritually minded is Life and Peace. For if ye live after the Fleſh, ye ſhall die: But if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 6, 13. And then can be no greedy deſires after ſenſual Delights. An affection or hankering after them is the principal thing forbidden, for there is large Commiſſion given, *Gen.* 1. 29. & 9. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 4. A ſweetneſs is put into the Creatures, and ſence given us to perceive it; but they are to be uſed according to the bounds God hath ſet in his Word and our Nature. To be temperate in all things, and not the leaſt ſenſual minded, is what doth become Men and alſo Chriſtians; Neither let *Ungodly Men walking after their own luſts* think them leſs happy, becauſe theſe have not an unlimited enjoyment, as they wrongfully uſurp to themſelves; for the great God, who gives us all things richly to enjoy, may well preſcribe after what manner they ſhall be received, eſpecially ſeeing it is for our further good. Sobriety gives a better reliſh to every lawful delight, then all the ſtudied Sauce and Contrivances to thoſe who are full and Surfeitted. But then we do err not knowing our ſelves, for Nature doth not ſo much require Pleaſure, as now and then a little Divertiſement, but is for a middle and even State between Pleaſure and Pain;

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There may be obſerved a wearineſs of the former, if too long dwelt on, and the deſire of intermiſſion. *Take Reaſon into Advice with Enjoyments, and then they will not be troubleſome or occaſion of inconvenience; but this is baniſhed becauſe it is thought to leſſen, only for that it conceives of them according to truth.* Indeed the Act is little and mean, common to us with Beaſts, unſatisfying mixt and vain. When ſought after they are full of trouble and impatiency, and afterwards is Diſappointment and Vexation. All which periſh in the uſing, and are determined in this Life; which ſignifie no more taken all together, then the ſingle interrupted Acts, all which go of as a Dream when one awaketh. So it is not poſſible for the true and real Happineſs to conſiſt in them; all this may Learnt as a Man.

But then the Grace and Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt teacheth more: That there is a real good ſet before the Sons of Men, that we are to preſs forward to it, and take heed leaſt theſe things hinder. There is great Talk in the World about following Pleaſure, and too much Practiſing of it; not minding how conſiſtent it is with Chriſtianity, and the Attainment of true Happineſs. Abſtain always from unlawful things, and ſometimes from lawful, may ſeem a rigid and ſevere Rule; but yet is neceſſary, for the Boundaries between good and evil are ſo ſmall and indiſcernable, that he which will venture to go to the utmoſt of one, will before he is aware tranſgreſs, and paſs into the other: To prevent all Danger of this Nature, it is commanded, *Abſtain from all appearance of Evil*, 1 Theſ. 5. 22. All Exceſs is Evil, even what are eſteemed the more innocent Divertiſements (if followed too much) do turn aſide the Heart from God and good things. The Apoſtle Prophecies of theſe laſt Days: That, *Men ſhall be lovers of Pleaſures, more then lovers of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 4. But it is ſtrange, that any ſhould be ſo, who really believe in him; for can they imagine he hath Communicated more Goodneſs to things then is in himſelf? That there is more Satisfaction in earthly Vanities then the things above? May they not more certainly conclude, that he purpoſely made things here ſo ſmall and empty, leaſt they ſhould take off our eſteem from him, that fulneſs of Joy, and the Pleaſures for evermore at his right hand? By theſe ſweet things he gives an earneſt, if we ſeek after it, and ſhall be found worthy, That, *He will commit unto us the true Happineſs*. And therefore Luke 16. 11, 12.

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let the Christian be put in mind not to be Liquorish nor Desirous after present things, but turn the whole Stream of his affection to God, and the things of his Kingdom. Look diligently to himself, that he forsake all to come unto them. Let him who hath this hope, purifie himself from all dregs and defilements of Sensuality. And let those follow after it, who are strangers to Godliness, without Hope, and who have nothing else to trust unto, Who if they are bereaved of this, they are bereaved of all; these are Sensual and earthly, the other man is spiritual and Divine.

He hath the Body subdued to the Spirit, Whereas some willingly suffer their noble and free born Souls to be inslaved unto a lump of Flesh. And become the worst of Gods Creatures, for they are not Vassals to themselves, nor Act contrary to their own Nature. All the Excellency of a meer Sensualist lieth in his outside. A gallant Horse exceeds him in Beauty and Strength, the Lyon in Courage, a Fox in craft and subtilty; but indeed he hath the Pre-eminence in that which should be his Shame, for all things unseemly and abominable meet in him together, which are single, and not to be found but in the worst of Bruits. Man would be a contemptible Being, if it were not for that Divine
Ps. 8. 5, 6. thing within, which preserves his Soveraignty over the lower Creation, but when this is defiled by the filthiness of sin, he sinks below himself. He forfeits his Honour by disobedience unto his God; and his Soul creeps and cleaves unto the ground, which was given to raise him up unto Heaven. As to the Body none hath much reason to Glory, for the Beasts excel us in every Sense, and are equal in every Member. Wherefore the Almighty sent us into such Flesh, we are not to enquire, but rest satisfied with the good Pleasure of his Will. *Nay, but O man who art thou, that replyest against God? shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* Rom. 9. 20. God made us immortal, but we made our selves vile and corruptible, For *he did not suffer his holy one* (in whom was no Sin) *to see corruption*, Psal. 16. 10. Whatever our Condition is now in this Tabernacle, it was not grievous before the fall, and we deserve worse then what is laid on us. The Children of God contentedly fear with all the Weakness and Pain belonging to the Flesh, having for support, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. Happiness arises unto them out of what by Nature is miserable; All things work together for good.

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But it is time to enter within this vail of fleſh. The Soul is the Man himſelf; Compare *Mat.* 16.26. with *Luke* 9.25. The Body is enlivened and made ſenſible, but is as it were a meer Trunk or Engine for the Soul to Act in. We know leſs of the way of the Spirit then of other things, but ſince what was written, *Eccleſ.* 11.5. there hath more Revelation come forth, What appears from thence and manifeſt reaſon is to be laid open, that we may know how to Labour after our proper Happineſs. We ſhould have been very much in the dark, if not for the Law and Teſtimony, and the light in them; yet ſtill we are ſhut in a narrow Room, cloſely confined within the Walls of thick Clay; ſo we muſt not expect a perfect knowledge thereof, till this ſhall be made glorious and tranſparent: *For now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then face to face: Now I know in part, but then ſhall I know, even as alſo I am known*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. It is no ſmall inconſiderable thing, for obſerve with what it is ranked; *The Lord ſtretcheth forth the Heavens, and layeth the Foundation of the Earth, and formeth the Spirit of Man within him*, Zech. 12. 1. It being the manner of his wonderful working, to comprize a great matter in a ſmall place. And this argues the Excellency of ſpiritual things, that they are of equal with material, though theſe ſeem as much greater (as the Ocean is to a ſingle drop) and therefore are as worthy to be ſought after, as what may be ſeen or handled, now with the outward Senſes. Such is the Wiſdom and Contrivance of God, that thoſe things are declared unto us whilſt in the Fleſh, and in a World of ſenſible Carnal things. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, for the life was manifeſted*, 1 John 1. 1, 2. Now theſe cannot be Eat nor Drunk, nor keep Warm; but yet are received in, and as ſenſible to the Soul, as they are to the Body. And alſo have the aid of Senſe to convey them in. And tend equally to her bettering growth, and Eſtabliſhment; The Soul may be known by its Operations, which may be diſtinguiſhed (as we give Names to the ſeveral parts of the Body) by the Underſtanding, Will and Affections. Of the Soul.

By the firſt we have the knowledge of Good and Evil, Truth and Falſhood, to follow the one, and eſchew the other; which we naturally and readily do: For though the Practiſe of the World diſcovers that Men are *Wiſe to do evil, and to do good have no knowledge*, Of the Underſtanding.

ledge, Jer. 4. 22. they forſake the Truth and greedily run after Errour, yet not apprehending them ſuch, but through counterfeit and diſguiſe appear to them as good and true. Their underſtanding being darkened doth not ſee throughly in things, and they looking through a falſe Glaſs judge according to the outſide, and miſtake appearances for good, and deluſions for truth. Men are deceived by falſe Notions, for they follow after what is ſeemingly beſt and convenient. If the mind did ſee clearly into the things ſeparate from the deceitful Varniſh they have put on, if the Fogs were diſpelled within and without, they would not miſs of the good and right way.

If any man walk in the day, he ſtumbleth not, becauſe he ſeeth the the light of this World : But if a man walketh in the night he ſtumbleth, becauſe there is no light in him, John, 11. 9. And this is the Condition of People at firſt, though it is hard to let ſo much light into ſome Men, that they may juſt diſcern their own ſtate : It is certain, mankind did as little know (what they moſt ought) the things of God, and another World, their own future Happineſs, and how to ſecure it, as thoſe now in the dark night ſee of the things of this World. That Revelation which he hath made in Scripture doth diſcover it all as plainly as the Sun ſhineth in the Firmament, to ſee the things before us. And if thoſe be made appear to concern us as much as theſe do, then a like underſtanding of them will be found altogether neceſſary. Every one knoweth, that barely to ſee, ſignifieth not much, without Reaſon or Senſe within, manifeſting their Nature whether good or evil unto us, for otherwiſe Poiſon might be received in as wholſome Food. He is reckoned a Fool who cannot put a difference in things of common Life, between what is for his Welfare and Harm ; He is thought a heedleſs Fellow, and next to madneſs, who hath no regard to what may preſerve, or what may deſtroy ; He is reputed ſtubborn and wilful, and unpitied when he falls into Miſery, who would not ſuffer himſelf to be forewarned thereof, nor would uſe means (when he might) to prevent it : All this is exactly ſo as to the World to come. The Holy Ghoſt doth often uſe the ſimilitude of light and darkneſs, by the former ſignifying that manifeſtation of the Will of God to us Men, what he would have us to know, and more particularly for that which came by the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, which is in order to *recover-*

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ing of ſight to the blind, Luke 4. 18. ſee Iſa. 9. 12. & 60. 1, 2, 3. Mal. 4. 2. Luke 1. 78, 79. John 1. 4, 5. The Condition of thoſe before, and the refuſal of it is darkneſs. *They know not, neither will they underſtand, they walk on in darkneſs*, Pſ. 82. 5. Even at this very day, *This is the Condemnation that light is come into the World, and Men love darkneſs rather then light, becauſe their Deeds are evil, for every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light leaſt his Deeds ſhould be reproved*, John 3. 19, 20 But alas! What ſignifieth this pitiful ſhift? For no Mans ſins are to another, but to God only; and he knoweth them as well with their utmoſt Sinfulneſs and Aggravation, as if committed openly before all the World. *The darkneſs hideth not from thee*, Pſ 139. 12. The light is not manifeſted to make our Sins known (for they are before) but for the Prevention and avoiding of them. Gods Will would be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, if his ways were as much known; *For they who know him, will not offend againſt him.* Our Souls would eſcape out of the Snare of the Fowler, if we did ſee it laid for us. We ſhould not yield to Satans Temptation, if we did know the utmoſt in it; no more then a Wiſe man Acts againſt his Reaſon and Intereſt, for the alone Promiſe of a Rattle or Childiſh Toy. Eph. 5. 13.

If he had not to do with Fools and Blind, he could not drill them on with ſuch Toys and Vanities. The Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, Pleaſures, Riches and Honour, are the baits he uſes; which make a Glorious ſhew and pretence to be the good things allotted to the Sons of Men. At firſt ſight they dazzle our Eyes, we perceive nothing but Beauty and Lovelineſs in them; yet if it be throughly conſidered, all theſe put together do not make good that Happineſs and Peace which mankind ſo eagerly deſires: And they are to be had in Gods ways, ſo the firſt and great Temptation Vaniſheth.

If the Enemy cannot draw Men off from God and Religion, he trys to corrupt and deceive them therein by Lies and falſe Suggeſtions; but all this may be prevented by the written Word without, and the underſtanding within he hath given us. The Foundation of the whole is, which way to atone, pleaſe, and find acceptance with Almighty God; this cannot be better known then by what himſelf hath ſhewed by Angels, his Son and Holy Men inſpired by him. Who have done it faithfully and truly, and laid down a reaſonable way to this purpoſe. *And*

have received, so ought we to walk, that we may please God, by complying with all his Mind and Will, which he hath revealed unto us by them. Now this could never be done, unless it was known; And this neither by seeing it in a Book, nor hearing with the Ear (for a Child doth this) unless it be understood. *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me, give me understanding that I may learn thy Commandments*, Psal. 119. 73. *The inspiration of the Almighty giveth men understanding*, Job 32. 8. He did not to Horse and Mule, for these are carried by blind instinct of Desire and Aversation; but we with Knowledge and Choice as to Good and Evil. *Thy word is a Lamp unto my Feet: And a Light unto my Path*, Ps. 119. 105. Without that our own Understanding is altogether insufficient, as may be seen by the wandrings of those of old time, who were carried away with dumb Idols, the strange Follies of Idolatry and Superstition, that ignorance and uncertainty of the chiefest Good and Immortality. Something may be observed at this day which confirms that, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. It is an amazing thing to consider, those who are prudent as to the Affairs of the World, who have all Knowledge and Skill of the best way to get Riches and Honour, who foresee and carefully avoid temporal Evils; yet commonly these of all Men are most ignorant, as to the things of God and their Salvation. They think it beneath their parts to condescend to such things, it is an undervaluing of their worldly Wisdom to practise Simplicity and Godly Sincerity. This they esteem as fit for none but Ignorant and Foolish people. One would admire hereat, if he did not call to mind, *Mat.* 11. 25, 26. 1 *Cor.* 1. 18, 19, 20, 26. The greatest Schollars are not always holy and obedient; for Knowledge puffeth up, and they Fancy it a Disparagement to come to the things that are base in the Esteem of the World, and the things which are despised. The Blindness received by *Adams* Transgression is not taken away, for they disdain (as they foolishly and ignorantly think) the meanness of the Remedy. There are some still Vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish heart are darkened: Professing themselves to be Wise, they in the end will become Fools; that all may know who come into the Promised Land, it was not their own Power or Wisdom brought them thither: For through proud Nature we are apt to

Deut. 8. 17.
Isa. 10. 13.

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rob God of the Honour due to his Name, to say we made our selves Happy. Such boasting is false and hateful to our great Master, who even this way teacheth us to acknowledge, (if we will speak but the truth) that *all our sufficiency is of him*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. If we are left to our selves, all our Wisdom is Earthly, Sensual and Devilish; and serves for no other end, but wisely to descend into Hell. Natural Reason alone is not able to Conduct unto Heaven, for it knows not the way; unless it had been for the revealed Will of God, we had been also Grovelling in the Dark, as our Ancestors, or the *Indians* and *Pagans* at this time.

Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with Reverence and Godly fear, *Heb.* 12. 28. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit, which is promised to every one that Asks, and that gives Life to the dead Letter making it understood, and leads into truth sufficient to render us Happy. That of *guiding into all truth* was a particular Promise to the Disciples, as appears by the Words following, *He shall not speak of himself, and he will shew you things to come*, John 13. 16. Now if he who boasts of this, will do the other also, have the Spirit of Prophecy as well as the pretended one of infallibility, then this Scripture extends to him; but seeing he hath not that, neither the other; for what Christ hath joyned together, he is Antichrist that puts asunder. *Shew the things to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods*, Isa. 41. 23. *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is Worshipped: So that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*, 1 Thes. 2. 4. That same Jesus from whom he pretends to derive his Commission and Truth, foretelleth that many false Christ's and false Prophets shall arise, of whom we are to take heed, and Commandeth, *Search the Scriptures*, John 5. 39.

For that only Objection, from 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. which the Man of Sin doth so mightily insist on to beat off the People from that word, wherein his own ways and Corruptions are so Condemned: The Argument doth not amount to so much, as that we ought to abstain from Meat and Drink, because possibly we may meet with Poison. For the wresting of Scriptures, to their own Destruction is a wilful known Act as the word Imports. Poison may be conveyed in unknown to us, but it would be more ridi-

culous to ſay, I will not Eat any thing, becauſe I know what is Poiſon, and can Eat that alſo, whereas this ſhould encourage him the more to neceſſary Food, becauſe he knows the other and can avoid it. The word of God is as neceſſary to nouriſh unto eternal Life, as the other to preſerve the preſent, and none need to be afraid: For this is certain (however People are frightned and perplexed about Doctrines and Opinions neceſſary to ſalvation) As in the ways of wickedneſs, none Periſhes without a Malicious, Sinful, Stubborn and continued Trangreſſion of the Will: So it is of the underſtanding, unleſs there is ſome Malignity and ill deſerving therein, God will never be eternally angry with Men for it. Things are ſo ordered, that every one may be ſaved by Labour and ſincere Uſe of means, and none miſcarries or is damned, but through his own Fault and known Wilfulneſs. *God would have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth*, 1 Tim. 2 4. The end is here put before the means, for the Apoſtle ſpeaks of Gods principal intention, and here mentions the way how they may accompliſh it, by knowledge of the Truth; which whoſoever doth ſincerely and univerſally (as any one may do) this will quicken and ſtir him to ariſe and be ſaved. It is the ſame as if in ordinary Converſation one would have his Servant go to ſuch a place, and then ſhews him the way.

Of Reaſon.

Truth is diſtinct from Man, for it is the very Nature of things without, the Connexion between themſelves, and how they pertain to us, whether Divine or Common, for ſo they are diſtinguiſhed to us when properly all things are Gods. There is a Power implanted in us to know them; many of them are hidden, which we diſcern by ſearching and inferring one thing from another, which is the proper Office of our underſtanding, and commonly called Reaſon. Some have been offended at this word, becauſe it is ſo little mentioned in Scripture, Whereas it is, 1 *Sam.* 12. 7. *Iſa.* 1. 18. *Acts* 17. 23. *Acts* 24. 25. and in innumerable places by other words to the ſame purpoſe, as Knowledge, Wiſdom and Underſtanding, and the great neceſſity of them is preſſed throughout the whole Book of God. He appeals to us, *Ezek.* 18. Whether his ways are not equal? Implying we have ſome Capacity to think thereof. *I ſpeak as to Wiſe men, judge ye of what I ſay*, 1 Cor. 10. 15. And then what he ſaith concerning

cerning the *Gentiles*, *That which may be known of God is manifeſt in them, for God hath ſhewed it unto them, for the inviſible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and God-head; ſo that they are without excuſe: Becauſe that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God*, Rom. 1. 19, 20, 21. Their way of knowing him was by inferring, it was ſome one who made this Beautiful Houſe of the World, *and he that Built all things is God.* They had but a dim knowledge of him, juſt believed he was, but for want of Grace and Revelation knew not how to come unto him, nor ſeek him aright.

This is our advantage above theirs, we have now (bleſſed be his Divine Majeſty) the Old and New Teſtament compleated, the ſum whereof is a rational way of pleaſing God, ſee *Mat.* 23. 16, 17. & *Iſa.* 44. 19. All our duty to him is *a reaſonable ſervice*, Rom. 12. 1. Here is to be ſeen his law for the Government of the World, which at firſt was given in ſhort (as well becomes Sovereign and infinite power) as the ten Commandment, which contain great equity. The Writings of the Prophets are as ſo many Expoſitions on them, who did exhort to the obſervance, and reprove for the Tranſgeſſion of them; all which may be obſerved to be reaſonable inference and concluſion from them, applicable to thoſe particular acts as even the heart of Man might judge. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his Servant?* Iſa. 50. 10. *God who at ſundry times and in divers manners ſpake in times paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son*, Heb. 1. 1. In whoſe Goſpel the things to be done, are moſt agreeable unto the Sons of Men; the precepts given us, are worthy of the Son of God, and came from above, for the Wiſdom of Ages could not contrive ſo excellent; He whom the Jews did ſtile a Carpenter, hath outdone all who were ever before him; his worſt and implacable Adverſaries could not ſay any thing againſt what he Taught, and thoſe ſent to apprehend him, did confeſs, *never Man ſpake like this Man*, John 7. 46. The malicious world could not find fault with his Doctrine; Of all thoſe Antichriſts and Hereticks, who have done ſo much miſchief to the Church of God, none have either wrote or ſpoken againſt the rules of Life, unleſs ſome mad prophane Perſons in a ſcurrilous Language, which prevailed nothing upon Wiſe and conſidering Men, and never made any Proſelites but ſuch as

were

were before led that way by their corrupt Lusts and Affections. Nothing can be said against them; for they are pure, tried, and even the perfection of reason. All do approve of their Excellency, that do admit them into full and due consideration; If reason were stretched out to the utmost, and suffered to have its perfect work, to look out every way, and how far this would dictate, This Star being now assisted by the Son of Righteousness, would direct to the right Path; though it be a small Light in comparison to the other, yet it will lead to the greater; by direction of both we may go on securely. Religion without reason is Superstition and Folly (God is not pleased with the Sacrifice of Fools) and reason without Religion, doth argue Man more ungrateful to his Maker, so liable to a greater Condemnation.

Well is it where they meet together, and each assist the other, remembring still which is subject, and must keep close to the other. The natural understanding prompts to do nothing prejudicial to our Happiness, and to follow after what conduces thereto; if it be further unable, that hinders not, seeing it is offered help from above: Gods Grace is sufficient, and that is never wanting to any who desire and seek after it, which every one may do. And therefore let none say (if he becomes Miserable) that it is through God he is so; *for I have no pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn your selves and live ye,* Ezek. 18. 22. That we may know how to do this we are shewed, and also required to follow after Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. God hath given us Knowledge and Power to be Happy, and hath done all things that can be well conceived; seeing he hath been pleased to make us as we are, to put us to a free Choice and Obedience: We are not Gods, but the Work of his Hands, he may do what he will with his own; if God should force us to do our Duty, that would be like the Sacrifice of a Beast against his Will. We ought to praise our God that he hath made us capable of serving him, who hath provided so much for our Good, that we may live for ever if we will; he doth press us forward to the things which are for our Peace; he doth *testifie against us, that he might bring us again unto his Law*; this is done by the Spirit he hath given us.

Deut. 8. 20.

Neh. 9. 29.

Con-

Conſcience is called *the firſt Spirit of Man*, 1 Cor. 2. 11. *Prov.* 20 27. It is the moſt excellent part of the reaſonable Soul, which being aſſiſted from above, make Application of the Mans actions to himſelf. *He that is wiſe, is wiſe unto himſelf*; and this bringing all things home, is moſt uſeful for accompliſhment of the great end of Happineſs; Reaſon may wander in fruitleſs Speculation and inſignificant Thoughts, but this Miniſters only profitable things: its Office is deſcribed, *Rom.* 2.15. *Their Conſcience alſo bearing Witneſs, and their Thoughts in the mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another*; which is a certain demonſtration, that Man is in ſubjection under a Law. He is not troubled for fear of Humane Power or Puniſhment, but for thoſe things only in his own heart, whereof that hath no knowledge; it hath reſpect unto the Inviſible God over us, who hath given a Law to all the World, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; the firſt had it Written in Tables of Stone, and to the other it was Ingraven in their own Hearts. Now ſomething ſits as Judge within the Man, examining all that is done by him; it will not condemn the Innocent, nor let the Guilty go free: It is Gods Vicegerent (and therefore a contempt to one is againſt the other alſo) making known his Will and Pleaſure, preſſing it to be obſerved: It is an emblem and forerunner of his future judgment, for it is neither to be bribed nor deceived, but determineth impartially and knoweth all things, rendring unto every one according to his deſervings; If well, then is comfort and joyful expectation; If ill, *Sin lieth at the Door*, there is regret and fear: Mention is frequently made hereof in the Writings of the *Heathens*, but we do not find they uſed ſo many Tricks and Artifices to ſtifle it, as is the practiſe at this day; Who think themſelves wiſe and happy if they can do thus much, and they may, but there is great danger herein; for if they ſhould ſuppreſs Conſcience in this life, and come to that place where it will be revived again, where the Worm ſhall never die; that little time of eaſe and quiet here, would ſignifie no more then if one in a light ſickneſs ſhould fall a ſleep for a Minute only, and thence awake in a continual burning Feaver. To commit more ſin, and to hope thereby to be relieved, is as fooliſh as to quench the Fire to caſt more fuel on; Indeed at firſt this doth ſomewhat ſtop the Flame, but after it will blaze more violently: So remorſe may be a little hindred for the preſent, but returns worſe

Of Conſcience.

See Exod. 23.20, 21, 22.

worſe by reaſon of the freſh guilt that hath been added, increaſing and driving nearer unto, but not removing the future puniſhment. It is now ſo grievous that ſome care muſt be ſought out one way or another; When by reaſon of iniquity, *the whole head is ſick, and the whole heart is faint*, there are two kinds of remedy; the one is of the Phyſitians of Souls, the Exhortation of *turning unto the Lord with Weeping, Faſting and Mourning*, the diet Drink of Penitential Tears, the exerciſe of Repentance; theſe ſeem ſevere and harſh (but yet, Who doth not ſubmit to as much for Bodily Health and Recovery? And is not Eternal Life as much as theſe?) The Patient doth not like theſe wholeſome Medicines; Is there none who can do the buſineſs ſooner, and more eaſily? When old Satan perceives any troubled in mind for their ſins, he knows the conſequent, if he doth not adminiſter preſent comfort, they will be renounced, which are the cauſe of ſo much Diſquiet and Vexation: And then Gods deſign that this ſorrow ſhould work repentance will take effect; this the other fears, and therefore will endeavour to hinder. He whiſpers that their preſent ſadneſs is not occaſioned by ſerving of divers Luſts and Pleaſures (for they were found ſweet in the enjoyment) but it is their Natural Conſtitution, againſt which they muſt ſtrive; Eat Drink and be Merry, Do not give way to Heavineſs. The poor Man thinks this admirable Advice, much better then the other four preſcriptions, and doth fancy his inward Diſeaſes will be healed more pleaſantly and ſafely; but mark the end.

He knows the vertue of ſtrong Drink, for when reaſon is deſtroyed, there are no reflex thoughts of upbraiding Guilt and approaching Miſery; all is in a peacable condition: This doth not laſt always, the ſober intervals return, and with them worſe heavineſs for laſt nights folly. He finds that did not perfectly cure him, but then reſorts again unto the ſame eſteemed remedy; by repeated acts he gets an habit of Sottiſhneſs, ſo by little and little, he doth ſtill the unpleaſing (becauſe true) ſuggeſtions of Conſcience; continual ſipping makes way for the Spirit of ſlumber and drowſineſs; a cuſtom of ſinning will at length take away all ſence of it. Habit and Uſe will make Drunkenneſs and other Sins become as Natural Actions, that they ſhall be committed without concern or regret afterwards, for that doth vaniſh by ſmall degrees till it is none at all; ſo Adultery and Fornication may ſeem all one, as Eating, Drinking and Sleeping. The

qualms

qualms following Injuſtice, Theft and Deceit go off, and come to be as eaſily practiſed as the honeſt works of the calling; ſin is of an hardening deceitful Nature, and thoſe who ſuffer it to reign for ſome time in them, at laſt loſe the ſence of Good and Evil. A thick and inſenſate skin is drawn over their hearts, which is the reaſon ſo few (though many live wickedly) are troubled with terrors of Conſcience. *Harden not your hearts* (that is their own act) *but exhort one another while it is called to day, leaſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin*, Heb. 3. 18, 19. which plainly imports that it may be done. All that live in wrong or iniquity, either have hardneſs of heart, or inconſideration, which is the leading ſtep thereto, or their Conſciences are accuſed of ſin. The firſt is a ſad Symtom of Eternal Death, when in Scripture Phraſe their *Conſciences are ſeared with a hot Iron, being paſt feeling*, Eph. 4. 9. *a reprobate mind*, Rom. 1. 28. The ſecond is folly and danger, the laſt is irkſome and unpleaſant, which would ceaſe if the cauſe were taken away. *He that covereth his ſins ſhall not proſper, but who ſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them, ſhall have mercy*, Prov. 28. 13. But as long as this admoniſheth and ſtirs within, there is life, and they are not dead in treſpaſſes or ſins. If men would not be impatient and grieve at its reproof, it would do them no harm, only perſwades to return and come into the way of Salvation; then it will be quiet and ſatisfied.

Wretched is that Perſon who doth ſlight and refuſe its motions, who grieves the Holy Spirit God hath put in to reclaim from the evil of our ways, and to bring back unto his Commandments; by this may be ſeen how deſirous he is of the happineſs of his Creatures; if they do any thing contrary, they are judged of themſelves, they are condemned of themſelves: That ſelf Indignation, ſecret Whiſpers, Twitches, Deſires, Intreaties, Solicitation, watching of Opportunity, Importunity, Laſhes, Threatnings, both fair and ſevere means, they are all to make them follow the thing that good is, and to affrighten them from evil. *The Spirit of Man is the Candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the Belly*, Prov. 20. 27. If it find any thing amiſs, it will not let him reſt till it be amended; This doth not torment Men, but only moves to take away that which is the cauſe of all Sorrow and Miſery. (This is repeated again, becauſe it may be thoroughly attended unto,) Satan labours mightily that it may not be ſo

thought; for if it ſhould, his principal deſign of deceiving Mankind would be ſpoiled; for though by yielding to his Temptations, they become Miſerable, yet ſtill he is not wanting to intimate, how that is not the cauſe, but ſome other accident. As he is full of all Subtilty, ſo Men are exceeding ingenuous to deceive themſelves; and ſo their own wit conſpiring with his, they eaſily believe what he would have them: And though none could ever find it at long running, yet ſtill they think the way of Wickedneſs a way of Pleaſantneſs, and it is good to walk therein. But let ſuch fooliſh reaſoners conſider this one thing at preſent (for more hath been, and is further to be offered to this point.) Whoever lives ſinfully, either his Conſcience is ſeared or not: If it be, then he is become ſtupid dull and heavy; ſo whatever he takes, cannot long and thoroughly enliven him, and he is no more happy then a Stock or Stone; Nay worſe, for he feels and cannot be rid of the manifold Miſery and Afflictions of Life, for which he dares not call up reaſon for comfort, becauſe it will Subminiſter further thoughts, and plague him yet more. He doth not at any time enjoy true and real peace, the utmoſt is ſtupidity: If he is not yet arrived to this wretched condition, but hath ſome feeling within; then that bitter regret behind, and horrible dread of Eternal Vengeance further on, are more troubleſome then the empty pleaſure of a darling Sin, or Momentary eaſe of gratifying a luſt. When he conſiders, he finds more Anguiſh and Vexation of Mind in one hour, then the Joviality of many days amount unto, and therefore he muſt be inconſiderate, or he can take no comfort in his life, ſo the utmoſt of a wicked Mans happineſs is ſtudied Acts of Inadvertency. Let him move where he will, a Companion goes along with him, and when he is free from Company or Buſineſs (and even amidſt them) drops in a ſilent thought, which vexes him that will not comply therewith.

There are who laugh at this word Conſcience, turning it into ſport and ridicule; but who ſeem to ſcoff at it in others, perhaps at the very time find its turbulent motions in themſelves; and if with feigned countenances they make a ſhew of much Mirth, yet the contrary is within, and whilſt they wittily deride the Rod, themſelves are ſmarting under it. If their ſenſes are then in a fermentation through Wine, ſo they feel it not, nevertheleſs when that is over, and they remember what is paſt, they are convinced

convinced from within, how they inveighed againſt thoſe things as idle Fancies, the reality whereof they muſt acknowledge in themſelves. There is no Man living who hath underſtanding but that doth recoyl upon him, condemning for what he hath done; and alſo alarm with fear of more then temporal inconveniencies, ſomething he ſees not, and beyond this life.

Some would impute it to cuſtom, for in matters indifferent there is an aukwardneſs and regret to leave of things which one hath been uſed unto; but herein is to be obſerved a great diverſity, for there is a ſlight vexation in the imagination only; but when Conſcience accuſes, there is indignation and anguiſh in the very Soul, which doth as much exceed the other, as the piercings of a Sword doth the ſcratch of a Pin. The firſt goes off and is remembred no more, but this riſes up in Sickneſs or Affliction: None is much diſpleaſed with himſelf for not doing of things which he never did before, eſpecially if they have a ſhew of inconvenience; but Conſcience prompts to the firſt act of duty, though never done heretofore, and expoſes to hardſhip and danger. It pricks on our Sluggiſh Nature to do ſuch things, God requires in his Word by ſincere Application thereof to our ſelves, though we would be glad of an excuſe not to do the ſame. Another particular is to be obſerved, which doth evidence the real diſtinction between Good and Evil as declared in Scripture; for when the mind is in ſuſpence and even between them both, as with young Perſons, if they do that which is good, they have no Condemnation for the ſame, but only when they leave it; ſo in Evil there is preſent regret, which continues till forſaken; and how long ſoever one hath been accuſtomed to this, there may be a little wiſhing to the contrary at firſt, but joy and gladneſs ſpring up when one hath perfectly recovered from it.

There is no ſuch care uſed to choak the ſence of common Affliction, or that ſmall diſplacency for Omiſſion of cuſtomary things as thoſe accuſings and ſuggeſtions of mind; theſe are endeavoured to be ſuppreſſed all the life long, but in time of dangerous Sickneſs or Death-bed they will appear again. Conſcience would do the very ſame in the midſt of Health and Life as then, but ſtupefactions and hindrances are ſought for, which fail at this laſt time; and alſo they approach nearer to God, ſo they dare not quench his Spirit as heretofore: They know not but Death may be at hand to arreſt and bring them before his Judgment Seat.

When Company, Buſineſs, Pleaſure cannot be had, but they muſt think whether they will or not, then is unexpreſſible torture of mind, and ſad fear; ſuch is the condition of the Wicked on a Death-bed, unleſs hardened or like dumb Beaſts become inconſiderate. Moſt are aſhamed, and therefore conceal their condition as much as they can; but there are ſome few ſuch Monſters of Iniquity, who were Malicious Tranſgreſſors in their life time, and will be ſullen now; If theſe are never ſo troubled in mind, theſe will not confeſs nor give Glory unto God, nor would have By-ſtanders converted and Edified, but will to the laſt make a ſhew they are no otherwiſe dejected then for Pains and Diſeaſes they ſuffer in the Body. And thus ſome being hardened, ſome aſhamed, others ſpiteful, let none wonder that thoſe horrors of Conſcience (which are real) yet are not ſo often viſible in wicked profane perſons, even in their laſt Viſitation.

Conſcience being the Miniſter of God to bring Mankind to his Obedience, will make uſe of the Authority given; being a terrour to the Rebellious, a praiſe and encouragement to them that do Well. The firſt are not given over: When they are in great Adverſity or Trouble, this will try what can be done then; for now People muſt conſider, eſpecially what hath brought this evil upon them. The good Spirit is glad to find them in this temper, forthwith informs the true reaſon thereof, and thence takes occaſion to perſwade to ſin no more, leaſt a worſt thing befal him. It cannot abſolutely force, but doth all next to that to reclaim from his ſinful and vain converſation.

Pſal. 8.4. Mic 21. 18. Rom. 10. 21.

Good God! *What is Man that thou art mindful of him? And the Son of Man that thou viſiteſt him?* Why ſhouldſt thou (but only becauſe thou *delighteſt in Mercy*) *all day long ſtretch forth thy hands unto a diſobedient and gain-ſaying People.* God would have him come to repentance and be ſaved, as he manifeſts by cauſing his light to ſhine in Mans heart again, notwithſtanding he hath before ſeveral times laboured to extinguiſh it; that if he ſtill goes on, when he ſhall be plunged into utter Darkneſs, he muſt lay all the fault on himſelf; for if he had yielded unto what God did, and would have done for him, and contributed half ſo much pains as he did in coming to the place of Torment, he had eſcaped that, and aſcended up above: For he had ſo many Warnings, Sollicitations, Repulſes, and Rubs caſt in his path towards Hell, that he could not travel on in quiet. He was hampered with the cords of a

Man,

a Man, *with bands of Love*; yet he would with the moſt hard Labour and Pain break through them, and follow after the Error of his own ways, which he finds to end in Deſtruction and Miſery. 'Saith he, Have I undergone ſo much Trouble and Vexation to make my ſelf a Caſt-away? Is the Lake of Fire and 'Brimſtone the portion of my Cup, and all the reward I muſt 'have for wearying my ſelf in the Devils Service? Have I done 'violence to mine own Inclinations, ſuffered ſuch Vexation of 'mind, and rejected thoſe good things offered me formerly by 'the Father of Mercies, but now (as my deſerts require) the 'God to whom Vengeance belongeth? Have I refuſed thoſe eter-'nal Pleaſures I might have enjoyed with him, and now come to 'all this? *Righteous art thou O Lord*, for thou didſt by thy Spirit 'warn me to flee this wrath; thou didſt ſhew how I might have 'done it, and gaveſt me Power, and all that was requiſite on thy 'part, but I was fooliſh, deſpiſed thy Counſel, ſet at naught 'thy Reproof, and have done deſpite unto thy Holy Spirit, and 'all without reaſon; *juſt are thy Judgments.* Such may be ſuppoſed to be the thoughts of the Damned, and (I believe) a great part of their Miſery is upbraiding themſelves with Folly, in that they took greater Pains to bring themſelves there, then others do to go unto Heaven, which was by Accuſings, Fears, and diſquiet of Mind in their Life-time; and though they did endeavour to pacifie, yet ever and anon thoſe bitter girds would return. *The wicked man travelleth with Pain all his days. A dreadful ſound is in his Ears*, Job 15. 20, 21. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up Mire and Dirt, There is no Peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked*, Iſa. 51. 20, 21. Their Conſcience would throw out that Clog of Guilt, which they do not yield unto, becauſe their Sin muſt be forſaken; ſo they are full of Contradiction and Torment.

There is a doubt (which lies open to common obſervation) againſt what hath been ſaid; alike unto what *Cicero* takes notice of, *Quibus mediocres homines non ita valde moventur, his Epicurus clamat omnium mortalium mentes eſſe perterritas. Tot millia latrocinantur morte propoſita, alii omnia que poſſunt fana compilant, &c.* ſo it is here at this day, Who are more ungodly and wicked then the loweſt ſort of People? Beggars, Vagabonds, and ſuch as juſt get their living; and yet theſe are not troubled with Fears and Scruples of mind; as they live, ſo they die without them. But Cic. l. 1. nat. Deor.

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they do not live absolutely without them, for at first these also have them, though not in so great a measure as others: but at length are hardened and stupified by a more fatal device, then all the studied invention of others. If any one will practise it, it is at own Peril; and therefore shall be here inserted; *It is gross ignorance*, for a man cannot have troublesome thoughts about that, whereof he hath none at all. Where is a forgetfulness of God over him, no knowledge of good and evil, otherwise then what is natural, which being not exerted nor furthered, there is some Sense at first, but this vanisheth by wicked Custom, hardness of Heart, unmindfulness of what shall be after this Life, as is the Condition of the poor and foolish. That these are not afraid, is no more to be wondred at, then a blind man going amongst Rocks, or upon the brink of a River, who is not concerned for his danger till he falls into it. So they are just led through the Vale of this Life by him, who tryes all he can to deceive the whole World. All his devices may be reduced to this of ignorance, for according to the measure thereof, every Person hath less regard to the things of God; for there is no resisting of them, but by not minding of them. A full Evidence that they are real, and more then talk only, because they always prevail and have influence where they are throughly considered of. The Understanding and Conscience brings to the knowledge of them: this cannot be otherwise avoided then by defacing and sinking them into Bruitishness, that is to do just no more then keep the Body in Life, eat drink and get Clothes. It may be, and is pinned down to this by the meanest of the People. But those higher are ashamed of this State of Folly and Blockishness, yea, that will not mannage the Affairs of this World. And therefore others will let out the Powers of the Soul so far as to do that: And then the things of God will also come in, for if they can once infer and examine a Consequence by his Works, (which they cannot look out of Doors but they must see) they must come to some apprehension of the Maker. And then they must hear and read somewhat of his Book, the Holy Scriptures. And further they find those Characters in their own Hearts, which exactly agree with them: So the good Seed is received in, and they have no other way to hinder the impression and growth of it, but by the deceitfulness of Riches, Cares of this World, and Lust of other things whereby they become unmindful; for the Soul cannot intend

tend upon two contrary things together. Thus it is provided as concerning Mans Salvation and Happineſs, and if when he knows the means, he will not uſe them; and the hindrance, but will not remove it, nor countermine and defeat the Wiles of the Enemy, he deſervedly miſſes thereof.

If our Heart condemn us, God is greater then our Heart and knoweth all things. Beloved if our Heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God, 1 John 3. 20, 21. *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life,* Rev. 22. 14. They have aſſured hope to all thoſe precious Promiſes of infinite more worth then all the Kingdoms of the World. In the mean while they have Peace with God. In that word is contained more Satisfaction then the moſt witty Senſualiſts can find, for their Wine is mingled with Gall, they have Bitterneſs intermixt with Enjoyments, but this is ſincere without allay. This admits a reflection of Complacency, not of Pride. *The Lord will give Grace and Glory,* Pſ. 84. 11. ſo Peace and Happineſs, the firſt is had here, and the latter hereafter. A good Conſcience doth not conſiſt in thoſe mighty Tranſports and Exſtacies, (though a little Taſte of them is ſometimes given) they are reſerved for eternal rejoycing in Heaven; but it is that conſtant Tranquility and ſmoothneſs of Spirit, fully contented with it ſelf, that doth not ſeek out for ſinful Divertiſements, for it hath no need thereof. This is affirmed to exceed all things in the World; it reaches within, giving an Acquieſſency and ſtayedneſs of Mind. It is alſo without interruption and trouble, making outward Enjoyments more ſweet, which are not worthy to be compared with what is perceived within. Unto the upright, there ariſes light in darkneſs, *Pſ.* 112.4. for worldly Cares, Affliction and ſickneſs they can apply, 1 *Pet.* 5.7. *Rom.* 8. 28. *Pſ.* 41. 3. for their mind aſſures them they have and do perform the Conditions, unto which thoſe and other Promiſes belong. The Memory of a well ſpent Life is a conſtant Satisfaction all along. And when it comes toward an end, they can lie quietly upon their Pillow applying to themſelves, *Iſa.* 38. 2, 3. 2 *Cor.* 1 12. 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 8. That which puts the wicked and ungodly in mind of the Threatnings out of Scripture, doth bring home the Promiſes to the Good and Obedient, and ſo they are Comforted. Yet few who call themſelves *Chriſtians*, are ſenſible of this Bleſſed Effect of a good Conſcience, even as few do diſcover the Miſery of the evil

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one; That ſame word and truth, which manifeſts the Reaſon of one, doth of the other alſo.

The Promiſes of God are only belonging to the Condition of univerſal obedience, as appears from the expreſs Words of the Covenant, *Jer.* 7. 23. *Ezek.* 18. 21. *Pſ.* 18. 22. *Pſ.* 119. 6, 101. *Deut.* 12. 32. *Mat.* 28. 20. *Luke* 1. 6. *Mat.* 13. 44, 46. 1 *John* 3. 6. *Tit.* 2. 14. More Texts might be added to the ſame purpoſe, but the truth is evident from within, for the neglect of one of Gods Commandments, or the allowance in one wilful known ſin hinders all true peace. *We truſt, we have a good Conſcience, willing to live honeſtly in all things*, Heb. 13. 18. According to this deſcription all have not, who pretend to it; There are three ſorts in the Viſible Church, meer Profeſſors, Partialiſts, and ſincere Chriſtians. The firſt are thoſe who keep unto the outward Ordinances, but Religion doth not govern their life and manners, theſe are condemned, *Iſa.* 1. throughout, *Pſa.* 50. 16, 17, 18, 19. *Jer.* 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Prov.* 21, 22. *Mat.* 7. 21, 22. *Pſa.* 66. 18. *Prov.* 28. 9. *Luk.* 20. 47. *Ezek.* 33. 31. & 36. 20. *Rom.* 2. 13. *Jer.* 42. 20. *The Soul that ſinneth it ſhall die*, Ezek. 18. 4. There is no reſpect, or mitigation had to the counterfeit and external Righteouſneſs, which here is Hypocriſie. The ſecond ſort are better, they do well to have reſpect unto ſome of the Commandments, but they neglect others. *Whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law and offend in one point, is guilty of all; for he that ſaid do not commit Adultery, ſaid alſo do not Kill. Now if thou commit no Adultery, yet if thou Kill, thou art become a Tranſgreſſor of the Law*, Jam. 2. 10. 11. The ſame God who hath forbidden all ſins of Unrighteouſneſs, hath forbidden the luſts of the Fleſh, *Gal.* 5. and ſo on the contrary. If thou liveſt in the one or the other, thou art liable to his Wrath and Puniſhment. Our Bleſſed Lord ſaith, *He that loveth Father or Mother above Me, is not worthy of Me*, Mat. 10. 37. Much leſs is he who prefers a paltry luſt or unjuſt gain before him: The firſt Commandment is, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Strength*, Mat. 12. 30. Which cannot be conſiſtent with reſervation of a known ſin. Who ſo loves God will forſake it, for he requires it, *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil*, Pſal. 97. 10. And then they muſt take up the ſame reſolution with the Pſalmiſt, *I will ſet no wicked thing before mine Eyes*, Pſal. 101. 3.

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These and such like inferences Conscience doth make, and falls out with the beloved sin; there are indeed several Whims and Fancies, with which the Man doth endeavour to stop the grumbling within, but yet the mind cannot be thoroughly satisfied as to the Foundation of a present peace and solid comfort, or assured hope of future Happiness. What Peace, as long as sin hath Dominion over him? He may go on in a course of Godliness, make a slight and partial Examination of his Life and Actions, but if he doth it thoroughly, then he is troubled with that breach of the Law; nay, all the other things in which he doth well, do not yield relief Equivalent to the Vexation for this one thing wanting. It is pity that those who have advanced a good way, should not go further; that they should be such Enemies to their present Peace, and endanger their future safety as to lose that, and the benefit of what they have wrought only to gratifie some sinful Lust or Interest. The Pleasure or Conveniency of that cannot make amends for the want of so much Good and Satisfaction, which is occasioned only by this accursed thing. By one poisonous Herb death is in the Pot, so this takes away all the delight from the practise of Religion. And other People looking on these Examples cannot think, neither do they find that it makes men Happy, but Miserable; for they see, and these experimentally know themselves to be sad and sorrowful in performance of Holy Duties. When they hear and read the Word, they find no Comfort, because that convinces of Sin. Whose Hearts are clogged with Guilt, it is aukward to lift them up to that God, who hath no Pleasure in wickedness. If at any time they are devout at the Ordinances; then peradventure they meet with greater remorse of Conscience for the reserved iniquity, which makes them dull, and think the Worship of God an unpleasant work. They go indeed, but when they are there, *What a weariness is it?* Mal. 1. 13. There are too many amongst the Worshippers of God, who live in unrighteousness, or practise some of the Lusts of the Flesh; so general hath the Corruption been this way, that it is thought excusable, and these gross Sins seem allowable to Flesh and Blood. Who thinks otherwise is branded for rigid and precise, that would shut up the Way to Heaven. God forbid any should describe the Way more narrow and streight then really it is (for it is the Duty of all to encourage Travellers, and not to frighten them) but on the other

hand, let none ſay it is broader then the Bleſſed Jeſus and Holy Men, moved by the Holy Ghoſt, have taught us; for that would give them the Lye, and cauſe Preſumption and Danger to the whole World. It is Chalkt out in the Word of God: *As many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be upon them, and Mercy, and upon the Iſrael of God*, Gal. 6. 16. they muſt follow theſe Directions, who would have their Feet guided into the way of Peace. Strange! That Men ſhould be enraged againſt the Conſultations of their own Security and Happineſs, That they ſhould willingly keep themſelves from Satisfaction of Mind. Doth the difficulty or fancied good of thoſe Sins, hinder from laying them aſide? It cannot be a harder Work, then to pull out the Right Eye, or cut off the Right Hand, yet if theſe offend Chriſtians are obliged, or to ſuffer what is worſe, *Mat.* 18. 8, 9. Yet this is not ſo grievous as may be imagined; for when thoſe Luſts (as dear to a natural Man, as the Members of the Body) are rooted out, the Labour is irkſome for the preſent, but afterwards Joy and Satisfaction ſpring up. They did for a Seaſon pleaſe the brutiſh part, yet that train of Guilt dragged after, did wound the inward parts; the Pain there did exceed all the Sweetneſs he ever had by the ſudden Enjoyment: For the faint delight of a ſmall time, his whole Life was rendred Miſerable. But when they are driven out, the Anguiſh goes off in a perfect Cure, and there ſucceeds the delight of a ſound mind. It being once freed from Guilt and deadly Sin yields ſuch Comfort that cannot be conceived, but by thoſe who have the Bleſſed experience. Which none can attain unto but who actually comply with the Grace of God, according to all that is written, *Tit.* 2. 12, 14.

The peaceable Fruits of righteouſneſs are to be had by thoſe, who are purified from all iniquity, who have knowledge in Divine Matters, and do according to it. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them*, John 13. 17. and miſerable are they, who do not. Who have taſted the good Word of God, every thing done contrary thereto, doth grieve and vex them. This is laughed at under the name of tenderneſs of Conſcience, but it intitles to the favour and acceptance of the Almighty, if he is careful not in the leaſt to offend. Who ſtudies in all things to approve himſelf unto God, and cares not if by ſo doing he gets the ill Opinion of others. If Conſcience be Evil, the Praiſe of Men will not make it good; but if good in it ſelf, the Tongue of Slanderers

Slanderers and Blaſphemers cannot render it bad. Reproaches cannot hurt it, and if compaſſed about with Innocency, thoſe ſharp Arrows, even bitter Words, do as little injury as if they were ſhot againſt a Wall of Braſs. It is above the reach and malice of the wicked, neither can they more diſturb her Peace, then Winds and Storms do the upper Region. Not the greateſt external violence, much leſs the light breath of envious Talking People, can move what is eſtabliſhed upon the ſure Foundation of righteouſneſs. And therefore it is ſuſpicious of thoſe, who prefer their Credit in the World before Duty, Who had rather Act contrary to Truth, then be Evil ſpoken of. They may do ſo ſtill, but if they knew what it was, *To have a Conſcience void of offence towards God and Man*, they would rather diſpleaſe the whole World then him only; and would loſe the Good-will of all, rather then this dear Friend within the Boſom; for if all Men living did ſeek out Delights and Honours to confer on another to make him Happy, they could not do ſo much as this alone. All the Pomp and Glory of the World, whatever can be named or is accounted dear amongſt Men, do not half ſo much (for they extend to the outſide) conduce to our Satisfaction as a good Conſcience only.

A Second Part of the Soul, is the Will; Whatever a Man doth or neglecteth, it is according to the diſpoſition of his Will, this inclining him to ſome things, and keeping off from others, according to which He Acts; Some have ſaid, that Actions have the Denomination of Good and Evil according to this faculty, whereas the Divine Law gives that, and this is but a Power to obſerve or tranſgreſs againſt it. The Spirit of diſobedience works in our Members. There is an Averſeneſs to God, and a ſtrong inclination without reaſon to run contrary to his revealed Will. Man by his Fall, is as it were turned upſide down; for what ſhould be under the Spirit of our Minds, doth rebel and get above. What ſhould be an Inſtrument to execute the Dictates of the Underſtanding, uſurps Authority over that. Having got the upper hand, this Self-will Commands in chief; ſo he doth things againſt knowledge, the Checks of Conſcience, and Dictates of right Reaſon. The Man practiſes thoſe things whereof he is convinced, they are not for his Good. He is ſold and held Captive under Sin, which gains more Strength by being ſubmitted Of the Will.

unto. Now this is no abſolute Compulſion and Force, (which he brought himſelf into) but like Slaves under an hard Maſter, who do many things which they could refuſe at the very time, but fear or other Conveniency makes them, till they can get their Liberty and Freedom. He that is moſt under the Dominion of Sin, is not forced to the Acts thereof, for ſeveral times he doth intermit them when they might be had. The Laſcivious Wanton doth not run upon his iniquity in the Market place, as a bruit Beaſt among the Herd. And ſo it is of other kinds of Sin; but it hath ſuch a prevalency, that for the moſt part he doth the ſame. It doth tyrannize and keep in aw, not ſuffering him to do the thing that good is: It makes him ſeek out things to gratifie Luſt, puts unto much trouble for Accompliſhment thereof, and which is an Aggravation of the Miſery, when he hath made Proviſion to fulfil them for ſome time, it is ſtill eager, and craving after more; the Acts do not ſatisfie, yet there is impatiency after them, and ſo much the more, how often they are had, *Crying out give, give, and it is never enough.* No Man can fulfil all his Deſires immediately, for ſome he muſt tarry before he can obtain, and thoſe intervals of Expectation are not altogether ſo pleaſant; for others he is diſappointed, both which create more Pain then the Delight of the thing wiſhed for. In the frequent Repetition of the ſame he is cloyed, and the Will Commands to ſeek out for new Objects, when he may weary himſelf in the range, but can find none.

Whoſoever committeth Sin, is the Servant of Sin, John 8. 34. And yet they were betrayed into it, with a Pretence of more Freedom, and being their own Men; for not ſo much Original corruption, as their own added Tranſgreſſion hath inthralled them. *While they promiſe them Liberty, they themſelves are the Servants of Corruption, for of whom a man is overcome, of the ſame is he brought in Bondage*, 2 Pet. 2. 19. Every one is thus, who is led away by ſinful Inclinations, which is the worſt ſort of Slavery. If they be fulfilled, he is thirſty after more; and if not, he is diſcontented when they did obtain, it was great trouble before; the thing when had, doth not ſatisfie; and ſtill Deſires are let out after ſomething more: All of us are miſerable and enſlaved in our natural State, but Gods Grace doth help and bring us out.

The ſpirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to Preach deliverance to the Captives, and recovering ſight of the Blind, and to ſet at liberty them that are bruiſed, Luk. 4. 18. To free thoſe that are the Servants of ſin. *Know ye not that to whom ye yield your ſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of ſin unto Death, or of obedience unto Righteouſneſs?* Rom. 6. 16. If Men will not yield ſubjection unto God, they do to ſomething elſe; they are ſervants of Sin and Evil, and as much under the ſuggeſtions of them, as the obedient Soul is bound to live according to his Word. Gods ſervice is perfect freedom in compariſon of ſerving divers Luſts and Pleaſures; yet theſe ſtand in competition with that, ſo one would think Men were in love with Deſtruction, or they would not ſuffer ſo much to fall into it; for leſs trouble rightly beſtowed would carry them to Heaven. *His Commandments are not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 3. Which cannot be ſaid of the dictates of a ſenſual appetite; neither is ſo much difficulty in keeping them, as making proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfill the luſts thereof. *The way of Man is not in himſelf, it is not in Man that walketh to direct his ſteps*, Jer. 10. 23. It is not in his own power to make himſelf happy, and ſeeing he fain would be ſo, let him make the wiſeſt choice. *The Lord commanded us to do all theſe Statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good always*, Deut. 6. 24. And who would not be confined to the things which are for his welfare and happineſs? It is for the ſafety of the Ship that it be ſteered; *Mans goings are of the Lord, how can a Man then underſtand his own way*, Prov. 20. 24. *That way is not good, which is after his own thoughts*, Iſa. 65. 2. And then unto whom can he ſtand better beholden? then that *the Lord ſhall guide thee continually*, Iſa. 58. 11. *The Steps of a good Man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way*, Pſal. 37. 23.

It is the property of the Creator alone, and not any Creature to have his own will: Angels do comply therewith, much more ſhould the Sons of Men, eſpecially when it is ſo reaſonable and excellent. It reſtrains from nothing, but what would do hurt and make us miſerable; Self will which is an Enemy to Righteouſneſs and Peace, muſt be pulled down. This is the firſt thing to be done, *If any Man will come after Me, let him deny himſelf*, Mat. 16. 24. ſaith our Saviour, which is no ſuch hard ſaying, as carnal Reaſon may Judge; for it is a greater ſatisfaction to reſiſt corrupt inclinations then to yield unto them, the leſs they are given

given way unto, the leſs ſtrength they have; the underſtanding part rejoyces to get Maſterdom over the Will, for that is naturally contrary to the Law of God; ſo Command muſt be had over it, or no Obedience will be performed.

Some have ſubdued Countries, triumphed over mighty Kings, led them and their people into Captivity, yet themſelves have been holden under the inviſible Chains of imperious luſt and deſire. They are troubled with ſtirs and commotions in their new conqueſts, but the greateſt are within their own breaſt, which cannot be appeaſed (though the others may) by outward force. *Thoſe Wars and Fightings come from their luſts, which War in their Members*, and cannot be ſuppreſſed with all the gallant Troops of Horſemen or brave Legions; Though they have got Cities and ſtrong Holds, yet ſtill *they luſt and have not enough*: If they kill never ſo many Enemies to poſſeſs their Lands, yet *they deſire to have, and cannot obtain* as much as they wiſh for; *they Fight and War, yet have not* what they would. And the reaſon of all is, becauſe they know not God, who is the only proper and commenſurate object for Mans vaſt deſires. There is no other way to Contentment, but to apply our ſelves unto the infinite One above, that he would be pleaſed to moderate our deſire after the things here, and turn the whole ſtream thereof unto himſelf. If we could ceaſe reaching after outward things more then what is neceſſary, we ſhould be more happy then thoſe who have greateſt abundance; the not having is no torment, where is no deſire. We are imperfect and wanting, ſo muſt covet after ſomewhat more; this leadeth our deſire to the end for which it was put in, that is, taketh off from the Creature which cannot ſatisfie, to fix upon the great Creator in whom all fulneſs dwells. *As the Heart panteth after the Water-Brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God. My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God: when ſhall I come and appear before God?* Pſal. 42. 1, 2. *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon Earth that I deſire deſire beſides Thee*, Pſal. 73. 25. *If ye be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things above*, Col. 3. 1. Theſe are equal to our boundleſs deſires, and even the contemplation do ſomewhat fill, much more will the enjoyment hereafter.

Whereas theſe here being ſubject to vanity, leave the mind craving and empty. What can be a greater Torment, then earneſt deſire after thoſe things which are not to be obtained by all

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that would, and if had to be disappointed of that satisfaction expected from them? Inordinate Affection, evil Concupisence, Covetousness have a present punishment, besides *the wrath of God which cometh on the Children of Disobedience.* To prevent these, direction is given in the words foregoing; *Mortifie therefore your Members which are upon the Earth*, Col. 3. 5, 6. If this be done, and the body is dead unto the World, there can be no desire after things therein. *Our Lord Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil World, according to the will of God and our Father*, Gal. 1. 3. 4. Christians are obliged by their profession not to love it, nor to walk according to it, 1 *John* 2. 15, 16, 17. *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. Let none think these harsh Doctrines, which make mans life miserable, when they do the contrary: In the World is trouble, who mind it are perplexed with cares, loss, and disappointment. If any (as none ever yet did) should compass all that he sought after, he would be dissatisfied, yea more then when he first began; for he hath spent his days and strength in a vain thing. He that succeeds most prosperously hath a bundance of Labour and Grief for his Portion, and when he hath done all, yet still gapes after more of the same, or somewhat else; it must be the more excellent way to cease from those desires, which are the cause of so much misery. This was the Doctrine of Antient *Philosophers*, they gave many specious reasons to enforce the observance thereof; but here was the failure, they would have desire taken of from outward things, but then knew not rightly where to place it; for we are not sufficient of our selves, neither could be happy in the exercise of vertue, that according to their notions, being but a barren and dry Subject, and not of so large extent as Mans capacity; so they left him hovering between Heaven and Earth, and he could not any where find rest for his Soul. But our Religion (which doth more exceed their Morality, then the Sun shining in its Brightness doth the first dawning of the day) removes this uncertainty and hindrance of Happiness. *We are not to look at the things that are seen*, yet *we look upon things that are not seen*, 2 Cor. 4. 18. We can apprehend something within, and bevond all sensible objects; *Lay not up for your selves Treasure upon Earth* (we are not at a loss what to do further, as they were) for we are taught and also enjoyned, *to lay up for our selves Treasures in Heaven*, Mat. 6. 19, 20. We are put in mind, *to set our Affections on things above*, when they are taken off from

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things on the Earth, Col. 3. 2. The Christian hath Subject enough for his desires, God and the Holy City. He is the Fountain of all Happiness and makes it glad, *in his Presence is fulness of Joy*, Psal. 16. 12. So he that in heart and mind thither ascends, and with him continually dwells, must be happy; *for our Conversation is in Heaven*, Phil. 3. 20. and to be preferred before him who roots in the Earth, and turmoils after what he must leave in a little time. Whereas the Saints look with disdain upon whatever seems Beautiful or is accounted excellent here below, but not worthy to be compared with those *Glorious things which are spoken of thee, O City of God*, Psal. 87. 3. Did others look up, and do the like things to intitle them to the same hope, they would not be cumbred about many things, but be more employed in the one thing needfull; When the mind Soars up to the third Heaven, it is calm an peaceable, all disturbances being gendred out of the Earth, but doth not molest who is above them.

Thus hath been shewed how our will and desire perverted by Original corruption and Additional Sin, may be right framed by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was sent to make up for *Adams* Transgression. Lust in the wicked is the occasion of much evil, but the *desire of the Righteous is only good*, Prov. 11. 23. Obedience is the condition of Happiness, *Jer.* 7. 23. *Mat.* 19. 17. *Heb.* 5. 8. 9. Now this could not be done if we had no will, no more then it can be by Beasts. By this power Man is exalted above inanimate and sensitive things; God hath given him power to be so, and he is become a self-moving Creature; he can go this way or that, so can creeping and forefooted things; but then he can do this or refrain, as there are not only inclinations but reasonings from within. When of two things he can do either, it is a demonstration that he is a free Creature: To Man (not the Fowls of the Air, or Fishes of the Sea) the Lord hath said, *Obey my voice and live*: He doth not command, nor are we obliged to what is impossible; the gracious Lord appeals to us for the equality of his ways, *Ezek.* 18. And he would not command us to turn and live, if he had not before put it in our power so to do. As we should think hard of the end, so of the means, for if a Man were compelled to lead a wicked life, and could not do otherwise, he might as well be punished for simple Eating, Drinking and Sleep as that; and so on the other side, if he were led irresistably (it is indeed by strong impulse and quickening

See Gen. 18, 19.

ening) by grace to a Godly life, he might expect to be glorified, becauſe he Eats when he is Hungry. *The righteous judgment of God will render to every one according to his Deeds*, Rom 2. 5, 6. What one is forced unto, are none of his: If a Man would violently put a Sword into anothers hands, and graſping that, thruſt it into the body of a third, he alone is guilty of the Murther, but not the Weak perſon who could not withſtand what was done. God declares throughout his Word that he will deal ſo with us, as we do with one another: But this will be more for our advantage, becauſe he hath Goodneſs, Mercy, and all Knowledge, whereby he will ſhew himſelf more graciouſly and uprightly, then now is done by the beſt and wiſeſt of Men. The Grace of God is his Word revealed in the Goſpel oppoſed to the Law, ſo *Joh.* 1. 17. *Tit.* 2. 11. and the aſſiſtance of his Spirit by which Men know, and alſo are inclined to do; but there is a power in them to work together with that Grace, 2 *Cor.* 6. 1. *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. Col. 1. 29. There is *a Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*; by the help of which he may make uſe of ſuch means as will procure greater degrees, and ſo doing may grow in grace. This is given to every one, *not that it is of Man, for what have we that we have not received?* 1 Cor. 4. 6, 7. Natural faculties are no more our own, then the Grace of God, for he is the maker and giver of both; But they may be uſed, and lifted up towards Spiritual things. Otherwiſe what doth it ſignifie to exhort People to Duty? All Preaching would be vain, and if they could neither underſtand nor do, it would be as ridiculous a thing to declare the Word in the Congregation, as among an herd of Cattle, or uttered to the Trees of the Forreſt; *Incline your Ear, and come unto Me; hear and your Soul ſhall live*, Iſa. 55. 3. Which doth manifeſt they might, if they would; *They refuſed to hearken, and pulled away the Shoulder, and ſtopt their Ears, that they ſhould not hear*, Zech. 7. 11, 12. Which doth moſt plainly imply that they might have done otherwiſe; There is an idle pretence too common among Men, for when preſſed to this or that Duty, the Excuſe is, I cannot do this, whereas if they would make uſe of the means (which are in the power of all) they may have further aſſiſtance ſufficient to do what is required of them. Some hence take occaſion to live habitually in groſs ſin, and others in all manner of Wickedneſs; but the great judge of all Men will be no more put off with ſuch kind of tricks, then themſelves will be

Pſal. 9. 8. & 98. 9.

by ſuch ſayings from their ſervants; and it is ſtrange that they ſhould be ſuch Deceivers of themſelves, as willfully to keep off from what would bring them to Obedience and Happineſs; the way to which is not to do our own will, but the will of him that ſent us into this place of Tryal.

Let none accuſe God as an hard Maſter, for though the unprofitable ſervant will be apt to lay the blame upon him to excuſe his own Sluggiſhneſs, yet he doth not reap where he doth not ſow; neither will he require the improving of a Talent, but according to what he hath given. *See, I have ſet before thee this day Life and Good, Death and Evil*, Deut. 30. 15. Some may think this laſt ſad thing is, but not the other; We cannot come nor be perſwaded to that, why the prophet *Moſes* for further aſſurance repeats it, *verſ.* 19. with the moſt ſolemn Teſtimony. *I call Heaven and Earth to record this day againſt you, that I have ſet before you Life and Death, Bleſſing and Curſing, therefore chooſe Life.*

Of the Affections and Paſſions. The affections have much influence over the will, to move it this or that way; theſe have been likewiſe tainted with original corruption, which hath infected the whole Man. To ſpeak of their irregularity and abuſe, is referred to ſome diſtinct Chapters hereafter; the preſent deſign is to ſhew that God hath ingrafted them into our Nature, and what is their right end, how they are to be ordered towards Happineſs, as they are governed by the everlaſting Goſpel. The Paſſions are a Torment to the Wicked and occaſion of Evil; ſo unto the Righteous are a comfort and inſtrument of good. The one pervert, theſe manage them aright; but conſidered abſtractedly in their own Nature, are not only uſeful, but neceſſary to accompliſh the great end.

Of Love, To begin with the moſt noble Affection, Love, which is the fulfilling of the Law. *The firſt of all the Commandments is, Hear O* Iſrael *the Lord our God is one Lord; And thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and with all thy mind; This is the firſt Commandment. And the ſecond is like, namely this, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, Mark. 12. 30, 31. *For this thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, thou ſhalt not Kill, thou ſhalt not Steal, thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs, thou ſhalt not Covet, it is briefly comprehended in his ſaying,*

Rom.

Rom. 13. 9. Love to God and ones Neighbour is the Whole Duty of Man; That keeps from offending the Moſt High, and alſo from doing the leaſt injury to our fellow Creature; for ſelf-love cannot endure any ſhould be done to our ſelves: Saith the beloved Diſciple (who makes good the denomination, by inculcating and repeating this word over to the utmoſt delight,) *This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments: and his Commandments are not grievous*, 1 John 5. 3. By theſe two general, judge of all that come under them; there is no Torment in Love, but all Happineſs and Satisfaction; it receives greater degrees according to its object.

And then how exceeding muſt that be, which ariſes from the infinite God? The joy of that Soul is unexpreſſible, who perfectly love him: That ſtrangers may conceive ſomewhat thereof, and come over to partake of it; if they would be fully convinced in the Heart, what every one will own with the Mouth, it is requiſite to lay down particularly; there is all the reaſon in the world that we ſhould love God, yea the very ſame why we love any thing. This is either the excellency of the thing it ſelf, or the kindneſs and actual good it doth unto us; upon all which God deſerves our utmoſt and whole affection: He is the excellent One, the Sum of all perfection. Speak of him as much as you can, and yet you will come ſhort; for he doth exceed. *The Lord is great, and greatly to be praiſed*, Pſal. 96. 4. It is not poſſible for any flattery and complement (that is only for poor imperfect Creatures) to be uſed towards him, for we cannot ſay more then really he is, nor attribute more Good, Glory and Honour then doth belong, and is in him. We love a ſingle Man for his Goodneſs, Wiſdom, Uprightneſs, Beauty; now they are but ſhadows and little in the Creature, but he is the Original and Fountain of all, much more then all, then the Ocean is to a ſingle drop. All lovely perfections that can be thought of or named, or are any where to us unknown (as there are millions) yet come from him who is the Author of all, with whom all fulneſs and eminency dwells. As for the relation he humbleth himſelf to have towards us, there is a jealouſie in the heart of the Natural Man to that; And if here ſhould be uſed fine expreſſions, the greateſt Wit and ſmooth Language to aſſure Men of Gods goodneſs towards them, they would ſuſpect it more under a flouriſh of words; and therefore cannot be directed any where better then to his revealed

Will in Scripture which ſpeaketh plainly, *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 5. 6, 7, 8. 1 *John* 3. 16. *Pſal.* 63. 3. *Pſal.* 73. 1. *Deut.* 7. 9. *Pſal.* 145. 20. *Jer.* 29. 11. *Jer.* 31. 3. *Pſal*, 68. 19. Look upon his whole Book, that excellent Law he hath given, that Love and Grace manifeſted by Jeſus Chriſt. Examine it altogether, conſider throughly the deſign of the whole, *He will have all Men to be ſaved*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. Even Heathens and thoſe without: *He is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to Repentance*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. This is ſaid as to the Scoffers mentioned, *verſ.* 3. and the worſt of Men; Reflect further on thoſe good and comfortable things, he hath given us to enjoy: *He doth good, and give us rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs*; ſo much for the uſe and delight of our outward Man, and then it is certain he never deſigned the miſery of that. He hath done the ſame equally extenſive, *Iſa.* 55. 1 *John* 7. 37. as to our better part; which appears by the Frame, Powers, and Tendency thereof. All things are eſtabliſhed for the preſent contentment and Eternal Happineſs of us all, both Body and Soul and Spirit, to bring us to the greateſt Glory and Exaltation we are capable of. If we would ſuffer our ſelves to be throughly made ſenſible, God hath a love to us, the enmity in our nature would be taken away, and we ſhould be reconciled unto him, as will appear more and more by a full knowledge of his ways, and our doing according to them. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you*, Jam. 4. 7. Have an honourable eſteem and good will towards him, and his kindneſs will be diſcovered to you. Whatever hard thoughts ariſe, or are ſubminiſtred by the Tempter, they all proceed from our ignorance and ſin; ſome remainders whereof are in good Men, though they ſhould labour all they can to have the ſame done away. *If any Man love God, the ſame is known of him.* Many make a ſhew of much love; but if true and ſincere, it will be manifeſted by the very nature thereof, for if we love God, we mnſt be careful to pleaſe him above all things, as Profit or Pleaſure, Favour or Good-will of Men. We muſt be zealous for his Glory, contented to ſuffer Shame, Reproach or any Inconvenience for him: We are to ſide with him againſt the World, and the corruption therein; a ſence of his favour and aſſurance of his reward, will make amends for all the ſeeming diſadvantages the other may bring on us. All Acts and Offices of Religion are Pleaſant, and this keeps in all Obedience: Love is a conſtant Princi-

See Exod. 32. 26.

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ple always abiding on the Soul, for it hath a Complacency therein, and Dictates at all times, to do all things well-pleasing in his sight whom we Love. *Take good heed therefore unto your selves, that ye Love the Lord your God, Else if ye do in any wise go back*, Josh. 23. 11, 12. Implying that if this be not in their Minds, they would do so. This suggests, that they can never do too much for God, makes them do every thing Willingly and Cheerfully, carries them through all the Varieties of this Life, sweetens their Enjoyments; and for Sickness, Pain, Loss, Affliction, this gives that Patience and Resignation, that they are as none adversity, for they can apply *Rom.* 8. 28. 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Prov.* 3. 11, 12. The apprehension of a good God above, makes every thing Happy unto them. *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you, continue in my Love*, John 15. 9. and he that loveth the *Son, loveth the Father also.*

Of Love to ones Neighbour.

Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth Peace, Good-will towards Men, was sung at the Birth of Christ our Lord, who fulfilled it by that excellent and improved Law, he gave unto us: *Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy Neighbour and hate thine Enemy, But I say unto you, love your Enemies*, Mat 5. 43. 44. This seems an unreasonable Command to Flesh and Blood, but only as it is corrupt and unbelieving, for otherwise it may be justified. *If thine Enemy be hungry, give him bread to Eat, and if he be thirsty give him water to drink, for thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord shall reward thee*, Prov. 25. 21, 22. Thou shalt by this means stop his further Violence and Malice. In point of prudence, it is better to bear a little Evil then by resisting receive greater; and trust to the recompence of God, for having obeyed his Command. We are obliged to do more then is common to Men, to manifest our Faith and Dependance on him, as may be seen by what is required, *Mat.* 5. 44, 45, 46. The Reason is added, *That ye may be Children of your Father which is in Heaven, for he maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.* God is provoked every day, yet he is strong and patient; He loadeth Men with Benefits, which they make occasion to sin yet more, which he suffers to try if his Goodness will lead them to Repentance; but if they offend yet worse, their Malice doth only hurt themselves, but he is highly exalted, and looses nothing if all the World were as

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Stubborn and Rebellious againſt him, as is poſſible for ſuch ſmall and limited Creatures to be. His Glory and Goodneſs and Happineſs is ſtill the ſame, for all the ungodly Deeds and hard
Jud. 15. Speeches, which ungodly Sinners commit and ſpeak againſt him. His obedient Servant, who is but Duſt and Aſhes, a Worm, and nothing in Compariſon of the Great Lord of Heaven and Earth, Who hath, and ſhall receive every thing from him, is here in Duty bound to imitate his Maker; and (all brough his Gracious ordering,) cannot receive the leaſt diſadvantage by it By loving Enemies, they become reconciled unto him, or not. If the firſt, then it is granted by all to be better then revenge. But ſuppoſe the worſt, They are ſtill malicious, and reſolved to do him all the miſchief in their Power; the whole in the end will fall on themſelves, and not on him. Will they ſay all manner of Evil of him falſly for Chriſt's ſake, his Religion and Good Conſcience? They cannot torment him in this, for he applys the Bleſſing, *Mat.* 5. 11, 12. and the Promiſe, *Pſal.* 31. 20. He may be juſt ſenſible, but doth not lie under Vexation and Diſcompoſure. The light breath which ſends forth evil Words, can never make any Wound in his Soul, who hath on the Breaſtplate of Righteouſneſs. Sayings of one another ſignifie nothing, We are all to ſtand at Gods Judgment Seat, and who have aſſured Evidence of being approved, Detraction there doth no harm but increaſes our reward, that we can heartily forgive the Authors thereof? Will they do their utmoſt, and perſecute him to the Death? As they did to the Prophets, the Lord Jeſus and his Saints; yet after they have done that, they have no more that they can do: They intitle him to a Crown, which the Lord hath promiſed to ſuch; ſo when he comes to ſuffer, he may well ſay with him, *(Who ſuffered for us, leaving us an Example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps,) Father forgive them, for they know not what they do:* When by the Eye of Faith he ſeeth the Heaven opened, he may with real Charity, and ſincere Affection cry out. *Lord lay not this Sin to their Charge.*

If it be reaſonable to love Enemies, ſo it is to love Friends; this we do as Men, that as *Chriſtians.* A new ſtone is laid, and both are raiſed above the common pitch. *A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye alſo love one another,* John 13, 34. from whence the Diſciple that leaned on Jeſus Boſome, makes this neceſſary infe-

inference. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his Life for us, and we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren,* 1 John 3. 16. To do the higheſt Act thereof that can be expreſſed. There is nothing more enjoyned in the Goſpel then Love. The Primitive Chriſtians (who did live exactly according to the Rule given them) were remarkable for this; See how they love one another, was obſerved by the Heathens concerning them, who herein fulfilled that Saying of their Lord and Maſter, *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye have love one to another,* John 3. 35. But we, that are reſerved to the dregs of time, are ſtrangely degenerated from the Practiſe of our Fathers, living as if there was no ſuch Command. How few among us do obſerve the Royal Law? *Without are dogs,* Rev. 22, 15. but theſe would be thought of the Chriſtian Church, who *bite and devour one another,* Gal. 5. 15. If reſtrained by Laws of the Countrey, which preſerve outward Peace, yet ſtill are ſnarling at one another. Theſe go to Prayers, as if there was no ſuch Petition, *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that Treſpaſs againſt us,* which muſt be begging a Curſe and Condemnation, inſtead of Bleſſing and Pardon. Theſe hear the Goſpel, which ſaith, *Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven you,* Eph. 5. 2. One would think there was no ſuch thing as Love mentioned, if he were to judge by the Actions of ſome People. This is no ſlighting Matter, or as ſome would make it a piece of Bravery, in that they can live contrary to Rules and Preaching, for it will be determined what the end of thoſe muſt be, who obey not the Goſpel. Hatred is contrary to Chriſtianity as bitter to ſweet, or is poſſible for things to be one to another. Let one do never ſo many Acts of Worſhip and Devotion, yet if he liveth in Malice and Revenge, Strife and Envying, Hatred and Variance, he hath the Name and ſhew of Religion, but nothing of the benefit and reward thereof. *In this the Children of God are manifeſt, and the Children of the Devil, Whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother,* 1 John 3. 10. *If he ſaith, he is a Chriſtian, he is not, but of the Synagogue of Satan,* Rev. 2. 9. the Author of all black and corrupt Principles.

There ſhould be a greater meaſure of Love amongſt thoſe, who have not only the form of Godlineſs, but the Power thereof; for they alſo are found defective in this Duty. They love indeed,

indeed, but ſomewhat of Diſſimulation and Partiality goes along with it. The firſt is thought a thing ſo neceſſary, that the common Saying is, He that knows not to diſſemble, knows not how to live. It is eſteemed an Act of Prudence, what the Apoſtle calls *Fleſhly Wiſdom*, but contrary to that *ſimplicity and Godly ſincerity, and the Grace of God*, 2 Cor. 1. 12. which did give him ſo much Comfort, and not only unto him, but to all that will alike obſerve it. Who have Conſcience towards God, do as in his ſight ſpeak unto Men, knowing that from him Diſſimulation cannot be hid. What *John* ſaith is obſervable, which he applies to this, *My little Children, let us love not in Word, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth.* Why ſo? *Hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and ſhall aſſure our Hearts before him, for if our Heart condemn us, God is Greater then our Hearts and knoweth all things*, 1 John 3. 18, 19, 20. A ſmiling Countenance or flattering Speech is not enough, but you muſt attain unto *unfeigned Love of the Brethren, andſee that ye love one another with a pure Heart fervently*, 1 Pet. 1. 22.

Neither is it to be confined to one particular Sect or Party, as if all the Elect of God were compriſed in a National Church, or ſuch a Congregation. While one ſaith I am of this, another ſaith I am of that, ye Hate, Reproach, and ſpeak Evil of one another. *Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies exclude out of the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 20, 21. and therefore not to be kept up by thoſe who equally hope to be Partakers thereof. It would be better if there was no diſtinguiſhing Terms, or Nicknames. *Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Maſter, even Chriſt, and all ye are Brethren*, Mat. 23. 8. *The Diſciples were called Chriſtians firſt in Antioch*, Acts 11. 26. and ought to have never been called any thing elſe; for Mens Perſons (ſeeing that the Apoſtles refuſed it) ſhould not be had ſo much in Admiration, as to give Denomination to their Followers, and aſſume unto themſelves that Honour, which is due unto the Son of God only. It hath given occaſion to Diviſions, raiſed Heart-burnings, and the utmoſt Malice among Men, to the Deſtruction of Charity and Peace. It is obſervable, that Chriſt explaining who was Neighbour to him that fell among Thieves, inſtances in a *Samaritan*, and there was Diviſion and ſeparate Meetings between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, as among us at this Day; ſo it is the natural and neceſſary Conſtruction of the great Commandment, to ſhew

1 Cor. 1. 12.

Luke 10. 29.

Mercy and Love to those of a different perswasion. We are all Members of one another, and ought to be united under Christ our Head.

Behold how good and pleasant it is, for Brethren to dwell together in Unity. Much Happiness arises from true Friendship, and there is none comparable to that which is built upon the firm Foundation of Christianity. Nothing can be more lasting and sure, if upon that alone without the rotten Prop of Worldly and sinister Respects. Whatever some pretend to generous Nature or Civility, none is like that which results from Goodness and Duty. The chiefest Love is to be shewed forth to those of our own Profession, but yet to be extended unto all, *Mat.* 5. 45. 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 3, 4. for though at present some are Strangers from the Covenant of Grace, yet we know not how soon they may come in; however we are to love them as they were made after the similitude of God, and are our Fellow Creatures. *Honour all Men, Love the Brotherhood,* 1 Pet. 2. 17. *If it be possible as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men,* Rom. 12. 28. What can be more reasonable? Hereby a Man is freed from all the torment of malice, envying and strife; he is not disturbed with thoughts of revenge, or knawing reproach of others, which are as so many Wracks and Instruments of Cruelty, to those who give way to these Sins. On the other hand, if there be any Satisfaction in Love, any Blessing in Peace, any good in mutual kindness and affection, he enjoys all this. In this word Love, all the Law is contained and obedience; so as a necessary Conclusion from this, all manner of Happiness. Ps. 133. 1. Jam. 3, 9.

A Second Passion is Fear. At first sight it may seem strange that this which troubleth and afflicts Man, should also conduce towards his Happiness. But God having set down such Decrees for our Salvation, as expressed in Scripture, this is necessary to attain it. God was pleased to take this way to be glorified, as to the Inhabitants of the Earth; to declare his Sovereignty over the work of his hands, to set up his Kingdom and Government over us, to which are annexed Rewards and Punishments proportionable to the great King, who hath prepared them. He may justly forbid a thing upon as severe a Penalty, as he thinks fit. None thinks hardly of an Earthly Prince, for punishing obstinate and ungrateful Rebels: Nay, themselves if they have Of Fear. Mal. 1. 14. Ps. 95. 43.

any Reason, must acknowledge they suffer their deservings. So it is of Gods dominion over us: His infinite Majesty and Greatness require all Honour and Subjection; His goodness appears, that he had rather People would live quietly and obediently under his Laws. *I drew them with Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love*, Hos. 11. 4. So that if there was any remainders of Noble Nature and ingenuity, they might be prevailed upon by his Goodness. But alas! we are averse to him, the Author of all Good we ever received; we struggle, we give backwards and break these Bands asunder. His love is despised, then he sends forth Threatnings if they will reduce to his obedience; and if they do not, Sentence is to be executed accordingly. If men will not love him, they should fear him, and that will bring them over unto his love.

He should be the chief Object of all the Powers of our Soul. *Sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread*, Isa. 8.13. It is Idolatry to love the Creature more then him, so it is a Provocation and Contempt to fear any thing more then him: Either to neglect Duty, or commit Sin for any terrour of men; Is he not more to be feared? *And I say unto you my Friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the Body, and after that, have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell, yea I say unto you, fear him*, Luke 12.4,5. forewarned, forearmed according to the Old true Proverb; and we are therefore told hereof that we may avoid it. We are warned to flee from the wrath to come, this we should never do unless we did fear it. It is so represented to us, that if we believe, we must tremble; for we do fear things less terrible and grievous. Who is he that dares wander alone in some Desert without the least Glimmering of light? That doth not shrink at being thrust down into a horrible and deep Dungeon, for a few Months and Years? He must much more abhor to be *reserved unto the blackness of darkness for ever*, Jud. 13. It is sufficient to startle the boldest worker of iniquity, and make him leave of to do so any more. Would not he who now commits Sin, because it seems to him sweet and pleasant, fear to drink of the bitter dregs of the Cup of Gods wrath, and to suck them out? He that is now all for mirth and jollity, and will purchase it at the price of wickedness, not enduring any thing that is dull and tedious, must be frightned with weeping and gnashing of Teeth, neither can he bear with the groans

1 Pet. 3. 14, 15.

and

and tediousness of a miserable Eternity. Those which run after any thing to hinder a little Discontent of Mind, and Melancholy (which if turned aright would prevent all this) how can they suffer the knawing Worm which never dieth? *The Sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprized the Hypocrites: Who among us can dwell with devouring* Fire? *Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33. 14. for they would be rid of a little pain and uneasiness. Even those gallant Spirits who pretend to fear nothing, must be moved at such things. Perhaps you do resolutely suffer those Wounds received in defence of King and Countrey, which are marks of Honour, and they will be cured in a little time, or you will be past Sense of them. But you cannot so easily bear, that not one single Part or Member, but your whole Body should be cast into the fire which shall never be quenched, where all Sufferings are full of Shame and Ignominy. To have no rest but in a Bed of Flames, not for one night only, but another, and so a third through innumerable Ages: Here Courage must fail, and thy brave Spirit be cast down: Flesh and Blood must abhor Pain so great, and of so long continuance. Though some are apt to say: Tush, God we care not for him, yet if they seriously consider of his Judgments, they must tremble and fear before him, *Rev.* 6. 15, 16, 17. However those seem to swagger with big words, with their horrible Oaths and Blasphemies, as if they could not be Men of valour and renown unless they did contemn and provoke the Almighty, yet let them prepare to meet the Lord of Hosts, the God mighty and terrible. *Are they stronger then he*? But should a Potherd strive with his Maker? What is vain Man, whose breath is in his Nostrils, to contend with that God in whom he lives, moves and hath his Being, who takes away his breath and he dies, who will repay to every one according as he deserveth? Let him whilst he is yet in the way, hearken to those gracious Words: *Fury is not in me: Who would set the briers and thorns against me in Battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together; Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make Peace with me, and he shall make Peace with me*, Isa. 27. 4, 5. God doth not delight in Punishment, it is twice called *his strange Act*, Isa. 28. 21. like a merciful good Judge, unwilling to pronounce what in justice he is bound unto. And 'tis this utmost degree of

Ezek. 22. 14.

1 Cor. 10. 22.

Deut. 32. 41.

wickedneſs (which none arrives unto without his own perverſneſs and fault) that hath made him prepare it. And he tells the Sinner he ſhall be too hard for him, yet invites him again to Reconciliation and Favour, *Let him take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make Peace with me, and he ſhall make Peace with me*: If he doth here ſlight it, inſinuating that Religion is an Act of Cowardiſe, he pretends to be above that, and fears nothing; What an unaccountable thing is it, that a little Earth-worm ſhould affront or deſpiſe the Great Lord of all the World? And if he continue ſo to do, nothing is ſo juſt and righteous, as that he ſhould ſuffer for the ſame. Even now he hath inward trembings of the Great God, and thoſe Puniſhments prepared for them, who hate him, and will not obey his Laws. As he looks out, or is alone, an horrible dread ſeizes him of the inviſible Power, whom he hath wickedly offended. Thoſe prophane abominable Wretches reſort to continual Company and Senſuality to ſtifle the Senſe thereof. By this way (which muſt fail) they *ſtrengthen themſelves againſt the Almighty*, Job 15.25. otherwiſe it were not poſſible to come up to ſuch an height of wickedneſs and tranſgreſſion againſt him. Fear is implanted in all Men, and the Divine Threatnings are ſufficient to work upon it, for the ſame things do terrifie now, and if thoſe were preſent and viſible in like manner, the ſtouteſt Hearts would run and be at their Wits end. It would be a more amazing ſight, then when *Abraham looked toward Sodom, and toward all the Land of the Plain, and lo the Smoke of the Country went up as the Smoke of a Furnace*, Gen. 19.28. we ſhould all think, we could never get far enough off from ſo terrible a thing.

If there were no Promiſes nor Threatnings, Who would be the Servant of the Lord? For now there being both, and other Arguments to yield to his obedience, that if we believe and conſider of them, it is impoſſible that we ſhould do otherwiſe then aſſent and be actually perſwaded by them, yet ſtill for want of that few are throughly brought over: But if theſe were taken away, none would ſerve God; and his Church would be like the wilderneſs. No Homage (though moſt juſt and due from us without) would have been paid unto him without Expectation of future reward, *Neither is he worſhipped, as though he needed any thing*, Acts 17.25. for he wants not the Services of Angels, much leſs of ſinful Men. His Glory and Happineſs was infinite and compleat

pleat before the World began, and cannot receive the leaſt addition: He created man to take him up unto himſelf, and out of the good pleaſure of his will, hath ordered him to dwell on the face of the Earth, to try whether he will be obedient and a fit inhabitant for Heaven; and hath placed on the other ſide of him *a Land of Darkneſs*, of *Dragons and Scorpions*, *where the Shadow of Death and no Light is*, that if he will not come whither he calls and invites him, he may as a juſt recompence of his ſtubbornneſs and tranſgreſſion fall into the other. In the mean while it is made known and he is liable thereto, that he may flee and get away; it is decreed he muſt take up his everlaſting habitation ſome where, and ſeeing that is ſo full of miſery, he ſhould now ſeek out *the new Heaven and new Earth*, *where dwelleth Righteouſneſs*. If we were to ſleep for ever, or to be as we were before our Birth, we ſhould not eſteem of, and conſequently not labour after the reſt that remaineth for the people of God; But now it is his Decree and Ordinance, that if we ſhould miſs thereof, we muſt neceſſarily drop where is no reſt day nor night, ſo we are obliged out of ſelf-love to endeavour more diligently after the other. There have been ſome of Opinion that to talk of Hell is not agreeable to the Goſpel Diſpenſation, and that fear ſhould be baniſhed, alledging, 1 *John* 4. 18.

For what end did God put it in Man, but that hereby he might be ſtirred up to ſhun the approaching Evil? Why hath he told the World thereof by his choſen Meſſengers, but that they might eſcape it? If it be not agreeable with the Goſpel, Wherefore is it ſo often ſpoken of therein? *John* (who was ſent to prepare the way of the Lord) Preaches of the Wrath to come and unquenchable Fire, *Mat.* 3. 7, 12. A little after, the Author of the New Teſtament ſpeaks *of utter Darkneſs*, *weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth*, Mat. 8. 12. *Everlaſting Fire and Puniſhment*, Mat. 25. 41, 46. The like was the Doctrine of his Apoſtles, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. *Rev.* 9. 6 & 14. 10, 11. & 16. 10, 11. & 21. 8. *Jam.* 2. 19. & 5. 5. *Jude* 5, 6, 7, 13. Laſtly, he who came after them all, as one born out of due time, delivered the ſame, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 9. *Knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord*, *we perſwade Men*, 2 Cor. 5. 11. So thoſe, who make this objection, differ in judgment from him and other Holy Men moved by the Holy Ghoſt, for they uſed this kind of Doctrine. Should they not now Teach, as Chriſt himſelf did, whoſe Embaſſadors and Stewards they ſay they are? Have they

they not him for an Example? Are they wiſer then he? Why ſhould not all the Arguments, which God hath given in Scripture, be made uſe of to exhort unto Duty? amongſt which this is powerful and apt to prevail; for though indeed Love is the moſt excellent and abiding principle of Obedience, yet the terrours of the Lord do more effectually perſwade Men, which will drive when the other grows faint and languiſhing. Becauſe of the little ſmart and irkſomneſs, there is an unwillingneſs to ſpeak or hear thereof; but it is an odd kind of Mercifulneſs to let Souls drop into Hell, rather then a little diſturb them before-hand with the rumour thereof, and they had better ſuffer that then the thing it ſelf. This brings moſt people unto repentance, for they look about themſelves, and think what will be the event of a wicked life continued in. The word every where denounces Wo and Curſing, Tribulation and Anguiſh againſt it, and their own Conſcience accuſing them of ſin, and that they are now ſubject unto all thoſe threatnings which they will certainly feel, unleſs ſome way avoided. All men, even the wicked and ungodly, do abhor miſery; and would flee from it if they ſaw it coming, and therefore they turn from iniquity leaſt it ſhould be their ruin. This converſion proceeding from ſuch motives as God hath given in his Word, is acceptable with him; *By faith Noah being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear* (obſerve that) *prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his Houſe*, Heb. 11. 7. *And others ſave with fear*, Jud. 23. After our Lord aſſures us of the joy over one ſinner that repenteth, *Luke* 15. He brings in the parable of the Prodigal Son, who was ready to periſh for hunger; the conſideration of that, and not any love to his Father cauſed the reſolutions of going home, yet he was kindly received who was ſo little worthy of it. So one rouzed up with fear comes to repentance, and ſeeing Gods wonderful compaſſion towards him, notwithſtanding his former ſins and provocation, which are all pardoned according to his gracious promiſe, *Iſa.* 1. 18. Now his former hatred and averſneſs is turned into good-will and reconciliation to his Heavenly Father, and he loves much, much being to him forgiven: This is increaſed more and more by further acts of Divine Goodneſs he is ſenſible of; ſo what was at firſt begun by fear, is now grown perfect and conſummate by love; and then living and being ſtabliſhed in all Obedience, he comes to that *perfect love which caſteth out fear*, 1 Joh. 4. 18. For having peace towards God and forgiveneſs of paſt ſins,

he

he is not tormented with affrightful thoughts of Damnation; for though heretofore he *was an Adulterer, or Covetous, or a Drunkard, now he is Waſhed, he is Sanctified, he is juſtified by the Name of our Lord Jeſus, and the Spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. 6. 11. He hath not that fear which he had at firſt, which hath Torment; There is a *Godly fear*, Heb. 12. 28. Which is to be retained all the days of our life. Love and this kind of fear are conſiſtent, *Deut.* 10. 12. The diſtance is infinite between the moſt mighty Lord of all things and a poor Worm, ſo it is requiſite to preſerve a reverence for his awful Majeſty, and not to think or ſpeak of him as an equal. It is the conſtant ſtile of the Old Teſtament, and alſo a Goſpel precept, *Fear God*, Luke 12. 4. 1 Pet. 2. 7. We are likewiſe obliged to be ſomewhat fearful concerning our own Salvation, *Heb.* 4. 1. *Rom.* 11. 20. *Phil.* 2. 12. 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. To do this is not Tormenting, but ſtirs up carefulneſs, and puts upon all things to ſecure it, *Happy is the Man that feareth always*, Prov. 28. 14. From which proceedeth a good Life, thence a good Conſcience, and then is no fear; none that is Slaviſh or hath Torment. Pſal. 2. 11. Pſal. 89. 6, 7.

A third Paſſion is Joy, which word denotes Happineſs, and is often enjoyned in Scripture; for thou commandeſt all things which may do good, O thou Lover of Souls. *Let the Righteous be glad, let them rejoyce before the Lord, yea let them exceedingly rejoyce*, Pſal. 68. 3. *Behold my ſervants ſhall rejoyce. Behold my ſervants ſhall ſing for joy of heart*, Iſa. 65. 13. *Thou ſhalt rejoyce before the Lord thy God in all that thou putteſt thine hand unto*, Deut. 12. 18. This joy is not taken away, but increaſed under the Goſpel; *The ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return and come to* Zion *with Songs, and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their heads*, Iſa. 35. 10. This the Prophet who ſaw his coming foretold, and ſo it was at the firſt appearing of Chriſt our Lord, *Luke* 2. 10, 11. He having now accompliſhed the work for which he was ſent into the World, there is ſufficient matter of gladneſs. Many righteous Men have deſired to ſee theſe days; The whole Goſpel, by which is eſtabliſhed a better Covenant, imports what the Apoſtle doth repeat in his exhortation, as if it could never be preſſed enough; *Rejoycing in the Lord always, and again I ſay rejoyce*, Phil. 4. 4. *This is the Lord we have waited for, we will be glad and rejoyce in his Salvation*, Iſa. 25. 9. Which is the happineſs of Heaven, the clear manifeſtation thereof to the World, and Of Joy.

and the possibility we are put in to partake of it. As then it will be a delight to remember how we came through this dark and troublesome Vale; so whilst we are here, we should lift up our hearts with expectation thereof. Accordingly the good Men of old time did, who had but the Glimmering whereof we have the fuller Light: If the heir of a Kingdom or a good Estate is so transported with conceits and fancies of future good, it cannot be thought absurd, that who have the evidence and hope of such an exceeding eternal blessedness (which will be one day revealed) should be proportionably pleased with the foresight and assurance thereof. Accordingly that Christian who hath a real interest, hath also a sensible rejoycing therein, which doth exceed all the pleasures and imaginations here. What results from gross and sensual things, is not worthy to be compared with pure and spiritual; yet God as a most Bountiful Master to his Servants, hath given them many things here for recreation and delight: He doth deny nothing which is good and convenient for us; We are all to admire and comply with the Riches of his Mercy and Love, who hath placed into our frame this affection of joy, and hath provided things proper for it, and hath done as much as lieth on his part to compleat the great end of our being happy.

John 16. 22.

Gal. 3.22.

Of Sorrow

How then came Sorrow in? God made it not, neither hath he pleasure in the grief of the living; but it came in through Sin and Transgression, *Gen.* 3. 15, 16. It was the effect of mans own disobedience, and was justly inflicted on him as a Punishment, so it is continued of every sin besides. As such God ordained it, but in the beginning when he made Male and Female, he did not implant it into our nature; we now come into the World crying, for we fell and were corrupted with our fore-father; Sin is interwoven into our very flesh, and as the necessary consequent thereof sorrow also. The Conception and Birth of our Lord was different from ours; in him was no sin, yet when he came into the World to make his Soul an offering for sin, *He was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief*, so great that *he poured out his Soul unto Death, and bore the sins of many.* But now since he hath borne our grief, and carried our Sorrows (O astonishing goodness of the Son of God) we are so far from sinking under them, that these also (I speak Mysteries)

Isa. 53. Mark 14. 34

ſteries) tend to our Happineſs. Whilſt we look on him, *whom we have Pierced, and Mourn for him as one Mourneth for his only Son*, even then conſidering how, *in his love and in his pity he hath redeemed us*, and *hath delivered us from the wrath to come*, an holy joy will ariſe. When we reflect that he who *did drink of the Brook in the Way*, *hath now lifted up his head* above Angels, Principalities and Powers; *Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name*; Our Sorrow is turned into Joy for the exceeding and glorious condition Jeſus (*whom our Soul loveth*) is in at this time; *If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, becauſe I ſaid I go unto the Father*: This he ſaid before his bitter Death and Paſſion, and now may ſeem to ſpeak to all the World what he did once to the Daughters of *Jeruſalem*. *Weep not for me, but for your ſelves*; Are you troubled at thoſe cruel ſufferings I have undergone? My Fathers indignation is paſt, they are all over, and the remembrance is not in the leaſt grievous, now I am crowned with Glory and Honour. But weep for your ſelves who are in the Wilderneſs, for the tribulation in the World; and more eſpecially weep for thoſe ſins which occaſioned what I did ſuffer; forſake them, and come to me: If ye pretend to be ſorry for me, and this doth not follow, that is, to cry out Hail King of the Jews, and crucifie him afreſh, and put him to open Shame. He hath inſtituted an holy Feaſt for the continual remembrance of his Paſſion; the reaſons thereof are to ſtir up our love towards him, and the hatred of our own Sins. God hath manifeſted his diſpleaſure againſt them by the Death of his own beloved Son, who came out of his Boſome; yet when he took ſin upon him, had the full Vials of wrath poured forth, as is evident by his Agony and bloody Sweat, by the pains he endured on the Croſs; His ſufferings were ſo exceeding, that none but *he who travelled in the greatneſs of his ſtrength*, *who was mighty to ſave*, and therefore could endure.

Zec. 12. 10
Iſa. 63. 9.
1 Theſ. 1. 10.
Phil. 2. 9.
Heb. 12. 1.
Cant. 1. 6.
John 14. 28.

The conſideration of which ſhould make us abhor our ſelves, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes, to mourn and be in bitterneſs for thoſe ſins which have ſlain the Prince of Life. This is that ſorrow required under the Goſpel, *for Godly ſorrow worketh repentance to Salvation not to be repented of*; *for behold this ſelf ſame thing that ye ſorrowed after a godly ſort*, *what carefulneſs it wrought in you*, *yea what clearing of your ſelves*, *yea what indignation*, *yea what fear*, *yea what vehement deſire*, *yea what zeal*, 2 Cor. 7. 10, 11. If it were

troubleſome, yet to obtain theſe good fruits none ſhould refuſe it; but our Gracious God hath ordered for the encouragement of all, ſome ſweetneſs therein; In the midſt of ſuch ſorrow the heart is light and cheerful, which ſeems abſurd and fooliſh to carnal Men; yet who have had ſincere contrition, know it to be true; even whilſt they were pouring forth penitential tears, gladneſs was in the inward Man. Let not this paſs off for ſtrange, for if in the midſt of laughter the heart is ſorrowful, why may it not be alſo joyful in the midſt of weeping? *Thus ſaith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity whoſe name is holy, I dwell in the high and lofty place, with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones*, Iſa. 57. 15. When Almighty God doth this, who or what can depreſs and make it ſorry? There is light and cheerfulneſs, however cloudy and dark it ſeems without; the Sun doth always ſhine in its full Brightneſs, but ſomewhat between doth hinder our perceiving thereof; ſo it is of Gods Favour, and the light of his Countenance. Our infirmities and imperfection do take away the feeling thereof; whereof we have the more, as they go off, and are endeavoured againſt: God is not far from us, but our iniquities ſeparate from him; he doth not ſo much hide his face, but our ſin and weakneſs, like a curtain before the Soul, intercepts the ſight thereof. None need to be diſcouraged, or think the King of Kings will not regard him, becauſe of his ſmall and mean condition; there is another gracious promiſe, *Iſa.* 66. 1. 2. Some do highly eſteem a kind word, or pleaſant aſpect from a great perſonage, and ſhall ſo little a thing, which doth no real good, be ſo much accounted of, when it proceeds from vain Man whoſe breath is in his Noſtrils? Is not his favour to be more valued who is Lord of Lords, *whoſe loving kindneſs is better then life*, Pſal. 63. 3. For it reaches further. Certainly if we had faith, we ſhould not care to be rejected and deſpiſed of Men, as long as we have the aſſurance of that; no more then he who hath the Kings favour doth regard the eſteem of a common Beggar; God (who is not a Man that he ſhould lie) hath promiſed it to godly ſorrow and contrition; herein are thoſe ſayings found true. *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy*, Pſal. 126. 5. *Bleſſed are ye that weep, for ye ſhall laugh. Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted*, Mat. 5. 4. To Sinners and the merry Men of the World, the Apoſtle gives Admonition

Luke 6. 21.

and

and Exhortation. *Be afflicted and mourn and weep, let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness; Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up*, Jam. 4. 9, 10.

But the sorrow of the World worketh Death, 2 Cor. 7. 10. Therein is nothing but Vexation, and therefore to be taken away: Christianity hath shewed an excellent way of doing this, which those of old time were ignorant of, see *Mat.* 6. 25. to the end, *Phil.* 4. 6. 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. 1 *Cor.* 7. 30, 31. Set not the heart and affection (for the disquietude arises from that) on the World. The more the mind is separated from Sensible things, it conceives of Spiritual, which *is Life and Peace*, Rom. 8. 6. And to this it is quickened, knowing that shortly we are to be quite taken from these, and for ever to abide with the other; and therefore is greater reason they should be the object of our thoughts and care, then the little things that are only for a while present. A lively faith sees into the other World, and over looks this: It gives a transitory glance, but not fixes on perishing things, and then they are no disturbance: Experience assures we must be certainly deprived of them, as we daily see others are a little before. Our profession teacheth to draw off our desires before we are utterly taken from them; to be in, not of, rather above the World, just set the hand to those little concernments here, but to have the affection still on things above; and then the Man hath not much of Worldly Sorrow for his Portion, though he hath some (for as he partakes of the corruption, so must he of the curse of his Fore-Father, which also in a great measure is taken away by Christ) yet he is comforted by Gods Grace, that he is very well able to bear. *Many are the afflictions of the Righteous: but the Lord delivereth them out of all*, Psal. 34. 19. And in the mean while giving patience and support, he is not broken under them; Heaviness in the heart of Man makes it stoop, but staying upon his God, he is not cast down: *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the Righteous to be moved*, Psal. 55. 22. Many are the places in Scripture which minister Consolation to them in affliction or trouble; this precious Balm if applied, will heal all their diseases and sores, of whatsoever kind they be.

But many Sorrows shall be to the Wicked, Psal. 32. 10. For this belongs not unto them, neither can they relish it: When they are in pain or heaviness, they must groan and be in like miserable condition with them which have no understanding; their sence

render them capable of ſufferings, but their Spirit being become bruti∫h will not ſuſtain them; they may indeed palliate, but can have nothing to get a real hope or deliverance; *ye ſhall lie down in ſorrow*, Iſa. 50. 11. Would they be raiſed up again? Then they muſt ceaſe to do wickedly, and hear the word of God which ſaith, *When thou art in Tribulation, and all theſe things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn unto the Lord thy God, and ſhalt be obedient unto his voice, for the Lord thy God is a merciful God, he will not forſake thee, neither deſtroy thee*, Deut. 4. 30, 31. And if thou learneſt obedience by ſufferings, thou mayeſt kiſs the Rod and ſay, *it is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes*, Pſal. 119. 11.

Of Anger and zeal.

Anger is often abuſed to Sin, and then is Torment; but may become inſtrumental of obedience and productive of good. When converſant about holy and divine things, it is *Zeal*; the nature whereof may be underſtood from *Mark* 3. 5. *John* 2. 17. *Pſal.* 69. 9. & 119. 139. *Acts* 18. 25. *Mat.* 24. 12. *Lev.* 20. 4. It doth ariſe from the love of God, cauſing a vexation of mind and indignation at thoſe who diſhonour him; He is revealed in thoſe ſeveral relations of King, Father and Maſter; ſo his Subjects, Children and Servants are bound to ſtand up for his Glory and Honour, when any thing is done that ſeems contrary thereto. If this Duty were not mentioned or required in Scripture, as it is, *Tit.* 2. 13, 14. *Rev.* 3. 15, 16, 17. and by many Examples, yet manifeſt reaſon teacheth it. Where is love of God, there muſt be Zeal: Which ſhakes off Negligence and Sluggiſhneſs of Spirit, and raiſes a Joy in doing his Will; this holy Fire warms Devotion, and utterly baniſhes all careleſsneſs and contempt in Spiritual Duties. The Man is pleaſed and doth give thanks when he ſees God glorified, and although there is a grief to behold the contrary, *Pſal.* 119. 158. *Acts* 17. 16. *Ezek.* 9. 4. that will be abundantly rewarded by the Moſt High; he ſhall not ſuffer for what others do, yet he cannot ceaſe to pray for them, to mourn in ſecret for their ſins.

Num. 25. 11. 13.

Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: Thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy brother, and not ſuffer ſin upon him, Lev. 19. 17. Charity and Love obligeth to admoniſh him to come out of the paths leading unto Death: A reaſonable Creature cannot juſtly take

take this ill; yet ſometimes Hatred and Reproaches are returned for this beſt kind of Civility and Friendſhip; however the one hath done his Duty, and what the other will one day wiſh he had hearkened unto; the Satisfaction of a good Conſcience requites for all evil intreaty in the mean while. If they Curſe him who ſtands up for Gods cauſe, he takes it patiently, knowing the time will come when the Lord will ariſe and maintain it himſelf. Thoſe who are the off-ſcouring and filth of the World, the contemptible ones of the Earth; yet when God cometh with his Holy Angels; the Scene will change, and themſelves will be the ſame who think and would make theſe ſo now. Indeed *Zeal* doth draw on Reproach, Contempt and Evil Sayings; and therefore ſome would not have it be uſed becauſe of theſe inconveniences. But ſurely they do not conſider, or not believe the Promiſes, as particularly, *Luke* 6. 22. Who have made Conſcience to ſerve God in all Duty, were in paſt Generations eſteemed Fools, ſimple and ignorant People, deſpiſed, defamed, evil intreated; under the Law, *They had tryal of cruel Mockings and Scourges*, Heb. 11. 36, 37, 38. Our Lord himſelf *was deſpiſed and rejected of Men, he was deſpiſed and we eſteemed him not*, Iſa. 53. 3. The like alſo happened to the firſt *Chriſtians*. And now we are fallen into thoſe perillous times, Where they receive his Name, but do not obey his Doctrine; make ſo much outward Profeſſion as to intitle them unto, *Having a form of Godlineſs, but denying the Power thereof:* They do not only reſt here, but according to the Apoſtles Prophecy, (which this day is fulfilled) *They are deſpiſers of thoſe that are good*, 2 Tim. 3. 3, 5. Theſe ſay they have hopes of going to Heaven, but what ſhould they do in the Holy of Holies, the pure and ſanctified place above, who cannot endure what hath a reſemblance to it here? It is alledged, they do not condemn or ſpeak againſt the good Actions of others, but their way of doing; they cannot approve of that forward indiſcreet zeal (it is their own Phraſe) and making ſo great Pretences in the Eye of the World; for ſay they, Men may be good *Chriſtians*, and yet not ſeem ſo outwardly. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3.

If it were ſufficient to be a *Chriſtian* only within, this would take away the Crown from the Martyrs, and accuſe them of Folly, for according to this ſuppoſal they might have believed on Chriſt, and have kept their Faith to themſelves, and ſo have eſcaped cruel Torments and Death. But this they did not, knowing what

was

was written, *Mat.* 10. 32, 33. *Rom.* 10. 9, 10. 'Tis replyed, the Case now is altered, We do not live amongst Heathens, but in a Christian Countrey: it is taken for granted, that every one believes Jesus to be the Son of God, what need of so much Profession? But are we not amongst Infidels in heart, Prophane, Ungodly, Wicked, half *Christians*? Who in heart and mouth set themselves against God and Christ, as the Gentile World did. What mean those bitter Words and Railings, Witty Jests and Drolls against those, who are careful to serve God in sincerity, but to discourage and make them ashamed of so doing? This hath been the usual Practise of the World; the Prophet doth arm those of his own and succeeding times. *Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the People in whose heart is my Law*, (this is a peculiar manner of expressing Gods Sincere and faithful Servants) *Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings*, Isa. 51. 7. Our Lord Christ doth severely threaten his Followers, if this device of the wicked should take effect upon them; *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and my words in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of the Father with the holy Angels*, Mark 8. 38. It is said Words indefinitely, and therefore extends to his Doctrine and Commandments; and so it is not called *Jewish* or *Heathen*, but the same Character which belongs to our present Age. He is ashamed or afraid of his Religion, that will not own it. If he shrinks back, and would not be thought Godly when he is so secretly, this proceeds from Pride and sinful Modesty. When the Name of God is blasphemed or taken in vain, the way of truth evil spoken of, Wickedness commended, every one that feareth God is obliged to speak out in Reproof, Vindication and Contradiction. Zeal was typified by the *Fire that shall ever burn upon the Altar, it shall never go out*, Lev. 6. 13. Can that be, and yet not seen? Is any zealous for God, hating Corruption whenever he sees it, who yet doth not appear so to others? The same Jesus who hath Commanded to *take heed of the leaven of the Pharisees which is Hypocrisie*, Luke 12. 1. *that We do not our Alms before men, to pray in secret*, Mat. 6. hath also said. *Ye are the Light of the World. A City that is set on an Hill cannot be hid. Let your Light so shine before men, that they may see your good Works, and Glorifie your Father which is in Heaven*, Mat 5. 14, 16. If ye are a peculiar People, you will be taken notice of; if zealous

lous of good Works, they will be known. If you do not ſound a Trumpet, and blaze them abroad your ſelves; but they praiſe you in the Gates, you cannot help that, your reward is ſtill with the moſt High, as long as you are careful to approve your ſelves in his ſight, and not as unto Men. None ſhould refrain from doing good, becauſe others may come to hear of it; no more then forſake the aſſembling of our ſelves together, becauſe others ſee us go to Church. Neither (as the manner of ſome) is this to be done only on the Lords-day, but as we have opportunity on every day, for ſo they did in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, *Luke* 24. 53. *Acts* 2. 42, 46. The Paſtors were then an Enſample to the Flock, *Acts* 3. 1. However ſtrange or preciſe it ſeems now to go to publick Worſhip on a Week-day, it was as unuſual then to neglect it. Who conſiders the Relation we ſtand in towards the Great God of the World, muſt think it a reaſonable Service to pay our Homage, and Praiſe him from every riſing of the Sun, unto the going down thereof. Nor are we to avoid good and edifying Diſcourſe, becauſe that will be likewiſe heard, but the Obligation is greater, from *Pſal.* 37. 30, 31. *Mat.* 12. 34, 35. If the heart be good, good things will come forth. God alone is the diſcerner of the Thoughts, and they do not appear, yet Words and Actions will. If they are good and juſt, it is impoſſible, but they muſt be diſcovered to be ſo.

But let it be cautioned, from *Iſa.* 42. 2. *Mat.* 12. 16, 18, 19. againſt making too much outward ſhew; There is a good and middle way, between too much Affectation on the one hand, ſinful Shame and Lukewarmneſs on the other: Both extreams are to be avoided, but indeed the firſt is ſafe, if the heart be ſincere, throughly purged from all Hypocriſie and Pride. It is much better to be too zealous, (if that can be, for there are no limits ſet in Scripture) then of a careleſs and indifferent Temper; for that is always ſpoken againſt. *But it is good to be zealouſly affected always in a good thing*, Gal. 4. 18. And if out of a good intention, God knows the unfeigned love in the heart, from whence it proceeds, and ſo may approve thereof: So there is no ſuch Reaſon, why that, which is called a forward indiſcreet Zeal, ſhould be hated and ſpoken againſt. Every thing, which doth exceed the ordinary and faſhionable Godlineſs of the multitude, is termed ſo. We have ſeen that of our Saviour fulfilled,

Becauſe

Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold, Mat. 24. 12. The judgment of God being different from that of Men, perhaps he may judge that to be true and prudent, which they thus call. Those Opinions and Excuses in Religion which are vulgarly received, are as commonly false. But admit some were over Zealous, Yet *Charity envieth not, thinketh no evil, believeth all things, hopeth all things*, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 7. And here will make a good Construction, that such is well meaning, and therefore this takes off from prejudice and evil surmizings against him. If some are more diligent in the Worship and Service of God, we ought the more to rejoyce, and glorifie God on his behalf. But to hate a Man for no other cause but his well-doing, is not what all, but only the worse sort of wicked do. Neither do thou too rashly condemn thy poor Brother, for whom Christ died, of Superstition, (that hath been so termed, which in the Language of the Holy Ghost is to *fear the Lord greatly*, 1 Kings 18. 3.) But how knowest thou his heart? It may be he doth what is Commanded, or thinks to be plainly inferred from the Word: If he is mistaken, thou art rather to rightly instruct, then malign or envy him; but in no wise to laugh and make sport; that cannot be justified on Fellow-*Christians*. It is sufficient to bear Reproach from those without, but it is more grievous when it comes from the same Houshold of Faith. However Grace and Wisdom will despise the Shame, and enable *to take Pleasure in infirmities, in Reproaches, in Necessities, in Persecutions, in Distresses, for Christs sake*, 2 Cor. 12. 10.

Great heed is to be taken, that *Zeal be according to Knowledge*; for where blind and mis-guided, it hath done much mischief to the World by horrid Cruelties, Massacres, Rebellions, Persecutions. *The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me*, John 16. 2, 3. Said our Lord to his Disciples and Followers, which hath been fulfilled to a Witness. Some have pretended for God and his Christ, and their Sword hath made many Fatherless and Widows, have after the most strange manner tormented to Death Women and Children, ript up Infants out of the Mothers Belly, shed the Blood of the Saints like water throughout Christendom. All this, and more hath been done by those, who in their own Opinion were zealous for the Prince of Peace; He came to save mens lives,

That of *Isa.* 11. 9. is observable for the reason there added.

Luke 9. 55.

lives, but these have made it their business to kill and destroy. The Disciples were reproved concerning the *Samaritans*, *Ye know not of what Spirit ye are of*, which plainly manifested, that he allowed not of the murder of Men, though for his own Honour, the best of ends. His whole Gospel Commands Love, Peace, Gentleness, Meekness, and forbids whatever is contrary to them. But this Doctrine hath been concealed from some, who have given up themselves to blind Teachers, those Sanguinary Priests and Jesuites; they have obtruded the Doctrine of Devils, for that of the Holy Jesus; and have put off for the Commandments of Christ, the Dictates of their Blood-thirsty minds. The silly People laden with Sins (and perhaps willing to make Atonement by murdering of *Hereticks*, which did increase their Guilt by slaying the Lords Heritage) were taught, ignorance makes the better *Christians*: They might have so much used their own natural Reason, as to have considered, that Christ's Laws cannot be obeyed unless they are known, and therefore they must search the Scriptures, which he Commands, *John* 5. 39. to see what they are, or have them from honest Teachers. But if they had done the first, they would have found *Ministers of Satan transformed as the Ministers of Righteousness*, 2 Cor. 11. 15. And they would have known them by this kind of Suggestions, which come from none but the Destroyer; for what seems hateful and cruel to us as we are Men, can never be thought to have been delivered by him, who came into the World to perfect, not deprave Humane Nature. The many sad Effects of wilde destructive Zeal, have proceeded from their wilful Ignorance of the Law he gave us, for they had been all prevented, if Men had only acted according to the Directions of the New Testament.

Some on the other hand have read the Scriptures; but through mis-interpretation, or rather wilful perverting some places of the Old Testament, have cryed up Zeal for the Lord of Hosts, have rebelled against, and even killed the Lords anointed on this wicked Pretence. He re-again the Teachers of the People did cause them to err: But suppose the utmost should be granted, they did contend for, (which yet is not) That Rebellion was lawful to the *Jews*, it can be no more inferred, that it is lawful to us *Christians* then Revenge of private Injuries which was allowed to them. We live under another Law and Dispensation. *Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say*

unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right Cheek, turn to him the other also, Mat. 5.38,39. there the Doctrine of Non-resistance is set down, and further enforced, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2. No Zeal is according to the Gospel, which stirs up to Sedition and Rebellion: If we would have it approved by God, it must be ordered according to the Rules laid down there, otherwise it is Sin and Madness.

There is another mistake concerning Zeal, of those who punctually observe their own Traditions, and are very exact in paying Tythe of Mint, Anise and Cummin, but omitted the weightier Matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy and Faith, *Mat.* 23.23. Thus did the *Pharisees* of old: And whether some of late have not been more zealous for a Ceremony, then Holiness and the Love of God, their own Conscience knows, and their Actions have discovered. We should be zealous for every thing according to its Proportion, for the Commandments of God in the first place, then for the things which Minister unto Decency and Order; for seeing they may both stand together, those are necessary and must be done, the other if Authority had not established them might have been left undone; however they are to be preferred, which are of Divine Institution and Substantials of Religion, before those which are Humane and Circumstantials only.

Of Hope. Hope is a right Application of the Promises in Scripture unto our selves. Those were many in the Old Testament, *But by Jesus our Lord are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises*, 2 Pet. 1. 2, 4. *This is the Promise that he hath Promised, even eternal Life*, 1 John 2.25. *In hope of eternal Life, which God that cannot lye promised before the World began, But hath in due times manifested his word through Preaching*, Tit. 1.2,3. for Discovery hath been made thereof by little and little. It was contained in those general Expressions, *The Lord, the hope of their Fathers*, Jer. 50. 7. *Hope in God*, Psal. 146. 5. and so Heb. 11. 13, 16. *He was not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City.* They had Confidence, God would do something more for his Servants then temporal and present Mercies, for they were also common to others: But as he is just and good, so he would make some requital for obedience, that Hardship and Inconvenience they met with from the World for his sake. Which they did

expect

expect hereafter in another place. God was the ſame then, and his Decrees alike ſure, though they were not ſo clearly made known unto Men. And therefore now it is called *Hope*, *which entreth into that within the Vail*, Heb. 6. 19. *a better Hope*, Heb. 7. 19. *a lively Hope*, 1 Pet. 1. 3. all in oppoſition to thoſe faint Gueſſes and imperfect Knowledge they had thereof under the Law. They had but a dull and glimmering Proſpect beyond the Earthly *Canaan*, but now *Chriſt hath brought Life and immortality to Light through the Goſpel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10.

Herein is compriſed greater and more durable Happineſs then is poſſible to conceive. That may ſerve to ſtir us up; but otherwiſe it doth not ſignifie to expect or talk of great things, if we did not know how to come at, or ſhould be diſappointed of them. But bleſſed be God we are both taught the way, and if we uſe the means (as they are put in our Power) we ſhall certainly obtain, *for he is faithful that promiſed*, Heb. 10. 23. The way and means are ſhewed in Scripture, and may be briefly comprehended in theſe Texts, *Lord I have hoped for thy Salvation, and done thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119. 166. *And every man that hath this hope, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure*, 1 John 3. 3. Hope puts upon Obedience and Action, otherwiſe it is vain and falſe. It is an idle and dangerous Deluſion to flatter our ſelves with the good things God hath prepared for them that love him, if we do not; or if we ſay we do, and yet not keep his Commandments. If hope alone will bring a Man to Heaven, Why will it not get him Money or Eſtate here on Earth? Why will it not provide him neceſſaries for Life? Every one Laughs at him, who doth neither Plow nor Sow, and yet ſaith, He hopes for a good Crop at Harveſt: It is alike fooliſh and deceiving in him, who expects to be an Inhabitant of the *New Jeruſalem*, and yet walks not in the way which leads thither. He may now ſooth himſelf with what fancies he will, but in the end will find *his thoughts ſhall be as a Dream of a Night Viſion, as when an hungry Man dreameth, and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his Soul is empty*. His idle imagination may ſuggeſt unto him, that he is juſt ready to receive the Crown of Glory; but when he comes to appear before God in Judgment, and is throughly rouzed out of Carnal ſecurity, he may be ſent another way. If only thinking would ſecure a Man, none would go to Hell, for the wicked and ungodly hope to eſcape that. Which makes them go on ſtill in their Courſe; for did they really

1 John 5. 3.

believe, themſelves ſhould be caſt into a Furnace of Fire for having done iniquity, *Mat.* 13. 42. they would no more do ſo, then one now will drink a Glaſs of ſeeming pleaſant Liquor, in which he knew was rank Poiſon. Either men do not believe that place, or Fancy they ſhall ſome way avoid, or they muſt be the veriеſt Fools to go the direct way to it. They dare not think God to be a Lyar, for fear he ſhould manifeſt the contrary on themſelves: And then they muſt not deny the immutability and truth of his Word, which is confirmed ſo often, *Iſa.* 40. 8. *Iſa.* 55. 10, 11. *Mat.* 24. 35. *John* 12. 48. 1 *Pet.* 1. 25. And then how can thou hope O Man? when that ſaith, *The unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. And yet thou ſhalt, when ſome of them thou Art, and doſt continue. We are ſure the Judgment of God is according to truth againſt them which commit ſuch things: And then how canſt thou hope to eſcape it? See *Rom.* 2. *v.* 3, 6, 7, 8. Thou mayſt be deſtroyed for all thy hope, for hope which is againſt the plain word of God, is not hope; for that which a Man hath no Promiſe, what doth he hope for? Neither let him perverſly abuſe, *Rom.* 4. 18. as think to be ſaved with hoping *Abraham*, for 'tis evident *Abraham* had the Promiſe of God, *Gen.* 15. 5. for what he hoped for, but had no natural Grounds for it, *Heb.* 11. 11. but here it is only a falſe and fond Preſumption, directly contrary to Scripture. And if he will for all truſt to go to Heaven, every common Beggar that lieth upon the Dunghil, hath greater Reaſon to expect to climb up to the real Throne of Majeſty, and be King over this whole Nation, for there is no impoſſibility in this, as in the other, *It being impoſſible for God to lie*, Heb. 6. 18. *When a wicked man dieth, his Expectation ſhall periſh: and the hope of unjuſt men periſheth*, Prov. 11. 7. Neither doth it avail much in this Life, it may ſtifle the afrighting thoughts of Damnation, but yields no true Peace and Comfort. It ſtanding upon weak and rotten Grounds muſt not be ſearched, for then it would totter and vex the Man that entertains it. But if he would not be deceived in the greateſt Concern of his own eternal Happineſs, he might know, that if his hopes now will not bear a through Examination, it is ſuſpicious they are falſe, (for true Gold will abide the Fire) and then they will not paſs for true in that day, when the Lord ſhall try all things. If himſelf ſhould

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ſtrictly conſider, he would ſpie out the deceit, much more will the all-ſeeing God; He will judge the ſecrets of Men by the Goſpel, the reſerved and innermoſt thoughts; which if here ſuffered to come out would defeat the vanity of all his hopes. But this would be diſquietude, he muſt not caſt them off, for he is willing to ſave his Soul, then ſuffer thy ſelf to be put in mind how it may be done. The error of moſt Men is, they will exclaim horribly againſt deſpair (which indeed is a ſad thing) and will take all imaginable heed of not falling into it, but then they paſs over the ſure and middle way as if this were too near it, and ſo fall upon another more dangerous Rock, which (they going on ſecurely without noiſe,) proves deſtructive to thouſands; I mean preſumption on Gods mercy where is no ground for it. What doth it help the Ship toſſed to and fro, to caſt out Anchor where is no bottom to fix on? When the ſoul is troubled, what real good doth it to let out hope, if there is no promiſe to ſtay it ſelf on? Or if he thinks he can, yet heed muſt be taken that it be not falſly applyed, for that would be like fooliſh Pilots, who fancy they ſee the Shore, and make towards it, when it is quickſands, in which they coming near are Swallowed. Alas! juſt upon ſinking they diſcover the deceit, but if they had before, they had avoided it; The Sinner dropping into the bottomleſs Pit, then is fully ſenſible of the falſeneſs of all his former hopes, but if he had been ſo wiſe in the day of Salvation, to have truſted unto them no further then they were to be made true and ſtedfaſt out of the Word, he had never came to this. Then perhaps Satan (working with all deceivableneſs in them that periſh) might beat off from examining themſelves throughly, repreſenting ſuch thoughts as Melancholy Fancies, tending to deſpair, which they muſt drive out of their mind. But they ſhould conſider whether ſuch do neceſſarily ariſe from Scripture, for by that all muſt be judged at the laſt day. *And if we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged*, 1 Cor. 11. 31. We might know before hand how it will go with us; if one hath a title to the Heavenly inheritance he muſt make it good out of this Statute Book, which God hath made for his government over the World; according to which is to be diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments; from *Deut.* 29. 20. *Rev.* 3. 5. It appears that every common perſon hath a name in the Court-roll of Heaven, and we are to arrive there upon the performance of ſuch conditions in the mean while, ſo plainly laid down

that

that every one may know whether he doth them or not. The Caſe being thus, it is the wiſeſt way (now being the only time of doing them) to read that Book to ſee whether all things are done that are written therein, and if not, to do them whilſt we may correct what is amiſs, then to go on ſlightly and negligently, not much minding it before hand, leaſt *when the Book is opened*, Rev. 20. 12. Such and ſuch things may be found wanting or miſtaken, and ſo the moſt ineſtimable good is loſt for want of a full examination and knowledge. This diſappointment will be more tormenting and argue of folly, becauſe then he will have no opportunity to fill up and make right what was wanting or falſe; he might have done it heretofore, but then would not conſider. And therefore leaſt any one that reads here ſhould come into this wretched condition, *Behold I have told you before*, let him make no delay to ſearch and try his wayes: if they are ſtreight when examined by the rule of Scripture, there is no fear; but if contrary, they muſt be forthwith amended by it.

Neither think this the way to deſpair (which is the only Objection againſt ſound Doctrine) but to be converted and healed. If one is in a damnable State, the greater danger is in not being ſenſible thereof, but none at all in knowing it, for he may recover out as ſoon as he will; let him repent and do ſo no more, no longer truſt unto thoſe errors and miſtakes: If he is not yet come up to that fitneſs and Qualification for Heaven, it is no hindrance but he may endeavour after it, he may come up to ſuch a degree of eminency and perfection before he die, and at preſent may do ſomewhat towards it. Gods Mercy and Pardon is to the greateſt Sinners upon true Repentance; there is no neceſſity for any one to continue in his ſins, and when he forſakes them, the promiſes do preſently belong to him, ſee *Iſa.* 55. 7. *Ezek.* 18. 22. So again the threatnings are not abſolute, but only hang over the impenitent; this word Deſpair is more often talked of then conſidered; for in property of Speech it is oppoſed to Hope, and is a diſtruſt of Gods Mercy, when there is good evidence in holy Writ that he may be partaker of the Promiſes. But if one can challenge no property in them becauſe of his wicked Life and Converſation, or lives in one ſin impenitently, to which damnation is threatned; this cannot be ſaid to be deſpair, becauſe as long as he remains thus, he hath no ground for hope, no more then a Murderer or Capital

Felon

Felon may be said to do so, when he knowing the Law thinks he shall be Hanged, if it be proceeded against him accordiug to the strict rules of Justice. And so it is of the sinner, *Except ye repent, ye shall perish*, Luke 13. 3. In common Opinions and Sayings, the sence of Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood is confounded; that passes for despair, which is but the right pronouncing of ones condition out of that word by which all are to be judged at the last day. 'Tis neither that, nor the inferences which necessarily flow from it, which bring this sad effect on any, but Mens com mitting and holding fast those sins to which the threatning part is just and due; but they might cease to do so and avoid it. The design whereof is to *turn many away from iniquity*, Mal. 2. 6. Not lull them in the continuance of it. Neither would *they make lies their refuge, and under falshood hide themselves*, Isa. 28. 15. only for a little outward quiet, if they did throughly consider the great good and satisfaction of a true and well grounded hope.

It was said of Old, *Happy is he that hath the God of* Jacob *for his help, whose hope is in the Lord*; but now he is much more, *who looks for that Blessed hope, and the Glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and so shall be ever with the Lord.* With the thoughts of this he can contentedly bear all the present miseries and infirmities of life, that God will give an end unto them, and receive him to himself, *where shall be no Sorrow, nor Pain, nor Crying*; Those which have the sure expectation of a Kingdom or good Estate, do not grudge at some small inconveniencies in the mean while, the thing waited for will make abundant compensation; so likewise who doth really hope for the Kingdom God hath prepared, can easily go through with that Tribulation he meets with in the World; *Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God.* Consider what he saith, *John* 14. 1, 2, 3. How can their hearts he troubled, who stedfastly believe this? but yet, O happy Souls! *Ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might inherit the promise; for yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10. 36, 37. *Be patient therefore Brethren unto the coming of the Lord, behold the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the Earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain*, Jam. 5. 7. He may be deceived of his crop by several accidents which he cannot help,

Psal. 146. 5. Tit. 2. 13. 1 Thes. 4. 17. Rev. 21. 4 Heb. 12. 2.

help, but it is not so with you: Do but what is required on your part; *for all the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen, unto the Glory of God by us*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not Sloathful, but followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the promises*, Heb. 6. 11, 12. *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it*, Rom. 8. 25. The Wisdom of God hath excellently contrived for our Happiness, by joyning these two precepts together; for the mind is restless till it obtains the desired good, unless quieted by divine command and pleasure; the contemplation of those joys above would vex and torture, unless we could patiently tarry for them. The *Israelites* were distressed forty years in the Wilderness before they came unto *Canaan*. *Jacob* served seven years for *Rachel*; in every temporal end there is fore-going labour and expectation (which none doth so much repine at) all which do instruct what is like reasonable, we should do but the same for Heaven, as others for the things of this World. The excellency and greatness whereof will be a more sufficient recompence for the pains and time of waiting. The Gospel doth not promise freedom from hardship, but compares our life to a Warfare, Race, Pilgrimage which have trouble intermingled; but there is sweetness at the very time by consideration of the victory, the incorruptible Crown, the pleasant Country we shall at length possess our selves of. The thoughts of this doth make us fight courageously, putting on for a helmet the hope of Salvation, run cheerfully, and pass through this barren and dry Wilderness where no Water of true comfort is. Having a mind whither we are going, and though they may seem afar off, yet even now *Joy springs up out of the Wells of Salvation*. We have example in a worthy Saint, who
Acts 20. 23, 24. speaking before of bonds and afflictions, yet still reckons that no hindrance *to finish his course with Joy*. None can refuse to suffer any thing, that hath in him the true and certain hopes of Eternal Life. *Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves that ye have in Heaven a better and enduring substance*, Heb. 10 34. *Rejoycing in Hope, patient in Tribulation*, Rom. 12. 12. That looks out to the end what we shall come to enjoy, not minding little difficulties in the mean while. Men do not fear the roughness of the Ocean, Tempests, or Thunder when they make a Voyage to get Money; they have no assurance before hand

that

that they ſhall not be Ship-wrackt; if they once ſet a ſhore, it matters not what they have undergone, but rather it is more pleaſant, the more dangers they have run through. And ſhall they be diſcouraged at being toſſed up and down in the troubleſome Sea of this life, who are aſſured that if they guide their courſe according to the rules given them, they ſhall at length arrive at the moſt fair Haven that ever was? Come fine weather or foul, gentle gales or *Euroclydon*, fears and perils they are contented; all things are poſſible and ſweet to them, who have this expectaon.

But the laſt and greateſt is behind, as they are juſt going into harbour; *It ſhall bring him to the King of terrours*, Job. 18. 14. How ſhall this be looked in the face? Yet he who hath a ſure intereſt in the promiſes, may hear one ſpeaking unto him; *Fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt, I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore*, Amen, *and have the Keys of Hell and of Death*, Rev. 1. 17, 18. There is no doubt of getting admittance, ſeeing he keepeth the Door, who therefore died and roſe again, that *where he is, there his ſervant ſhall be*, John 12. 26. What if the body lie ſome while in the Grave, this dear fleſh inherit creeping things and worms? yet when there, it is void of ſence and miſery; in the mean while this is our comfort that it will not be long there. Indeed it will be ſomewhat longer and to more diſadvantage, then of whom it is written, *Pſal.* 16. 9. All we have ſinned, but the holy one did not: But now bleſſed be the Father and the Lamb for it, *Our fleſh ſhall alſo reſt in Hope*, for it ſhall riſe again, and be as highly exalted as ever it was abaſed, *John* 12. 24. 1 *Cor.* 15. 42. & 44. *Phil.* 3. 21. What need he to fear whoſe body is committed unto the ground in ſure and certain hopes of Reſurrection unto Eternal life, and his Spirit commended into the hands of thee O God? *For ſo an entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly, into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 1. 11. Sweet ariſes unto them out of that which to others is nothing but bitterneſs; it is the meſſenger of God to bring them to himſelf, and that is true which the Son of his love hath ſaid; *The righteous ſhall go into Life Eternal*, Mat. 25. 46. and therefore they willingly ſubmit unto what comes upon this errand; All the promiſes are theirs, in all time of Tribulation, in time of Wealth, and further in the hour of Death they are happy; *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be ſober, and Hope unto the end*, 1 Pet. 1. 13.

A summary of the preceeding Discourses.

The tranquillity of the mind was what the Wisdom of Ages did labour after, but they for want of the Grace of Jesus Christ knew not what hindered, which should be first taken away. A gross and Stupid Understanding, a guilty Conscience, a crooked and perverse Will, strong and irregular Affections; but Almighty God hath sent him who was the Wisdom of the Father, *and hath published peace*, Isa. 52. 7. If our Souls be framed according to the directions given, they must be composed and quiet. Every one who doth not only call Jesus Lord, but doth the things which he saith, *Who being in Christ is a new Creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 7. hath his Passions so, as above described out of his Revelation; He is free from those miseries which do arise from inordinate affections, and they being in him conversant about holy things, afford more satisfaction then when pressed down only to the things of this life. It is more delightful to love God with all his Heart and all his Soul, then to them who are lovers of Pleasure, Riches and Honour; He loving his Neighbour as himself, doth exceed them who are outwardly kind and civil, but within dissembling and malicious. It is better to serve God with reverence and godly fear, and not to be slavishly afraid of any thing. *Psal.* 118. 6. *Psal.* 112. 7, 8. *Isa.* 41. 10. Then to others who dread him with the Spirit of Bondage, who stand in continual fear of evils to come, Death, Judgment and Hell. There is more contentment in rejoycing in the Lord, then worldly delights, loud laughter and hearing all manner of Musick. Godly sorrow and contrition hath been shewed to be less grievous, then cares, trouble and discontent for the things of this World. Who is zealous for God and true Religion, hath more rest in his Soul, then those who are so for their own honour and reputation, and are tormented with the least disgrace or evil surmising. And lastly, the assured hope of glory brings more comfort, then all vain, false and foolish confidences; The right use of the Affections grows up to immortality and reward, but the abuse is only for this present and short time; the act perishes, and the punishment is to come, besides the present irregularity and torment of disordered Passions. Whereas he that is born again, hath in a great measure escaped the original corruption of his Nature; he is not tossed to and fro with contrary desires and passions, within him is a great calm;

calm; this was done by the everlasting Gospel, *The Word of him whom even the Wind and Sea obey.*

It is to be understood, that none have an uninterrupted peace, for there is a *Law in the Members warring against the Law of the mind*, Rom. 7. 23. There are some lees remaining of corruption; and then are the several kinds of temptation from the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. Thou art too delicate, O Christian! if thou expectest to come to Heaven without some trouble; What Worldly good is to be had without it? Thou must withstand and go through all these Enemies; for if thou yieldest, or art overcome, thou art undone for ever. This is the good fight, Here is the Faith and Patience of the Saints; they cannot now enjoy perfect and absolute happiness, but this they are to contend for here, being reserved for them who shall be found worthy in another state. Take the Apostles Exhortation, *Be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might*, Eph. 6. 10. He there furnisheth with habiliments of War from the crown of the head to the sole of of the foot, see 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *James* 1, 2, 3, 12. 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. *The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your Soul*, Deut. 13. 3. Thus he did tempt *Abraham*, Gen. 22. 2. To know his obedience, or to try; but as to deceive or to perswade unto sin, *Let no Man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any Man, but every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed*, James 1. 1, 3, 14. And there is one called the *Tempter*, Mark 4. 3. Who finds something in him whereon to ground the Temptation, as Pride, Lust, or such like. God doth suffer all this to try our Obedience, (the whole order and establishment of things may be referred to this) none can compel; and by the assistance of his Grace, which is made known unto Men, they may be all resisted. The excellency of Mans faith and service unto God appears when he holds fast to that, notwithstanding Sollicitations and Discouragement to the contrary. Who would not fear God, (I had almost said even those who sin against him) if thereby he was assured to have a hedge round about? but if a gap were opened, and Satan might come in and trouble him a little, this would manifest for what reason we did, and whether we would keep constantly to obedience.

Of Temptations.

See Deut. 8. 2.

Job. 1. 10.

Innumerable are his devices, which all may be known out of Scripture; In general they are, either to commit ſin or hinder good. By the firſt he doth delude the wicked World, and with the latter aſſail Gods faithful people more eſpecially; though the one and the other are tempted both ways. He would firſt keep them from doing the thing that good is, but if it is done for all, then he will endeavour ſome way to ſpoil or defeat of the reward. *When they have heard the word, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was ſown in their hearts*, Mark 4. 15. As by prompting them to wordly talk or buſineſs preſently afterwards, which makes them forget all, and ſignifie no more then if they never heard it; ſuch are his ways and methods to keep Men from their good and Salvation. Whoſoever will not know when he may; and when he doth, will not counterwork and make void the deſign, it is his own fault if he periſh. *Neither give place to the Devil*, Eph. 4. 27. *Reſiſt the Devil, and he will fly from you*, Jam. 4. 7. *Your adverſary the Devil, as a roaring Lion walketh about ſeeking whom he may devour, whom reſiſt ſtedfaſtly in the faith*, 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. God hath given us power, and here commands thus to do; We are to our ſorrow told, he is come down unto us having great wrath, becauſe he knoweth he hath but a ſhort time. He doth not now ſo univerſally tyrannize over the bodies of Men, as he did before our Saviours coming into the World, but tryes by ſubtle windings and inſinuations to glide into the heart, or ſuggeſts evil Thoughts, ſpiritual Pride, Unbelief, Diſobedience. *We have not an high Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin*, Heb. 4. 15. So temptations may be without ſin, as where is no conſent unto them, but an abhorrence and utter diſowning of them in the mind. It is expedient to cry out, the Lord rebuke thee Satan; if any thing comes never conſent, the Lord pardon the iniquity of my thoughts, and reject them with more abomination; fly to the Lord Jeſus for help, *for in that he hath ſuffered being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted*, Heb. 2. 18. Say over his Prayer more earneſtly, learn from his example, *Mat.* 4. To beat back the temptation with, Thus it is written in the word of God. Then thou mayeſt know aſſuredly, thou ſhalt never fall away utterly through all his ſubtilty.

Rev. 12. 12.

As

As for other Temptations of the Flesh and the World, it is the design of the following Pages to confirm Man against them. Man hath been surveyed in his Thoughts, Words, and Actions, in the several Ages of Life, in Body and Soul; and he may be truly Happy if governed by the Law of God. He may enjoy greater good, and be free from more evils, according to this State of imperfection and beginning. He is a Creature built up by the wonderful working of God for Happiness, and another Life. All the Members of the Body are compacted and knit together, the Powers of Soul are rightly framed, made capable and designed for this great End. Now as all these have dependance upon each other, for Constitution of the whole Man, they are linked together for his Being; so every one of them singly and joyntly are to be ruled and ordered by Scripture for his Well and Happy being. If any is not, all the rest suffer; Confusion and Misery are in the Man. One string in a Musical instrument out of Tune spoils the Harmony of all the others. A single part which moves irregularly, and refuses to be under him, in whom we live and move and have our Being, troubles the whole Man. *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought unto the obedience of Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 5. Otherwise it would be almost the same, to do nothing towards it. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole Lump*, One reigning Sin sowres our whole Nature, and makes it unmeet for our Masters use: The Blessed Jesus who fitted his Commandments for our Good, gave this to his Disciples the last we read of, and consequently of greatest moment, a Summary Conclusion of all, that *they should teach all Nations to observe all things, whatever I have commanded you*, Mat. 28. 20. These are the only terms, upon which our Happiness is to be had, and who will not take it upon them, he may go without, he hath no share nor Lot in this Matter. This is *the pearl of great price*; if he will not Sell all that he hath, and give to the value the Lord Jesus hath put upon it, it is all one as if he bid nothing, he may let it alone. It is just, if we expect this good thing from God, that we should come up to those Conditions, upon which, and no other he will Communicate it: For he hath created the whole Man, and therefore is no Reason, why he should be served by piecemeal. We are bought with a price so upon both Respects of Creation and Redemption, we ought to *Glorifie God in our Body and Spirit, which are Gods*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Alas!

The Conclusion of the whole Chapter.

Alas! What are we to make so much adoe? That we will as it were Capitulate, and know for what Reason, before we submit to his obedience. *Man is a Worm, and the Son of Man is a Worm*, Job 25. 6. If we respect his outward shape, he seems a contemptible Creature. When he appears naked and stript off those Ornaments he so much Prides himself in, the Beasts are not so ugly in our sight. So little doth he appear in reference to the other Works, that the Psalmist might very well admire, *O Lord when I consider thy Heavens, the work of thy Fingers, the Moon and Stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou Visitest him?* Psal. 8. 3,4. How much do they exceed him in Beauty, Greatness, duration and usefulness? *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work*, Psal. 19. 1. They all observe the Rules he hath given them; Whereas sullen Man doth not ascribe the Honour due unto his Name, and will not so much shew forth his Praise as he ought; who will not speak out what he sees and knows, which is justly required, but perversly denied. As if this was not sufficiently provoking, he makes it his business to dishonour God and break all his Laws. Who is but a depending Creature, hath all from him, and yet Transgresses his most reasonable Commands. But how will he Answer, when God shall plead with him? How will they be able to stand before him? *Who dwell in Houses of Clay, whose Foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the Moth*, Job 4. 19. Yet this vain Man, whose breath is in his Nostrils, who is not to be accounted of (I tremble to think upon it) continually displeases him, who keeps it in, who holds his Soul in Life. This Worm wriggles and shews all the spite it can against his Master. *Most certainly these things ought not so to be.*

Psal. 145. 10,11,12.

The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea even the wicked for the day of evil, Prov. 16. 14. If he is not glorified in our Salvation, he will be in our Destruction. *When God arose to judgment, surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain*, Psal. 76. 10. The Condemnation thou inflictest on the wicked shall tend to thy Glory, and yet thou shalt curb them, that they shall do no more so wickedly. Thou hadst rather, O God, that Man were Righteous, but if not, thou art not the less glorified. Whether he be so or not, redounds upon himself. If he will be Happy, nothing is wanting on Gods part to make

make him ſo, if he will go in the preſcribed way; but if not, he periſhes of himſelf only. *I have no Pleaſure in the Death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord God*, Ezek. 18. 2. and therefore doth not in any wiſe contribute towards it. Whatever be his final Condition through his own doings, in the beginning he was made to praiſe and ſerve God in this Life, be contented in ſo doing, and at laſt enjoy him, that is Bleſſed for ever; this may be the Reaſon why in all Men, who are equally born to this great end, there is ſuch an earneſt and natural deſire after Happineſs. That this might be the more effectually obtained, God hath ſhewed out of his written Grace and Revelation, to all Sorts and Conditions of Men. A plain intimation, that as *he hath made known his ways unto men, ſo he would have them walk therein.* As they have Power given them to know, ſo to do. As God would the means, ſo the end; all are put in a poſſibility of the Crown and Reward. *All the ends of the World ſhall remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the Nations ſhall worſhip before thee*, Pſal. 22. 27.

Iſa. 2. 3. Mich. 4. 2.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

OF KINGS.

The neceſſity of Government in Order to Preſervation and outward Peace. Of the Perſon of Kings, wherein it is ſhewed particularly, that all their enjoyments cannot make them Happy, but their Happineſs is to be had in God only, with an Exhortation and Direction thereto.

I *Have ſaid, ye are Gods, But ye ſhall die like Men,* Pſal. 82. 6, 7. You are Partakers of the ſame Fleſh and Blood, ſubject to the ſame weakneſs and frailty with the meaneſt, but that Divine ſtamp of Sovereignty makes the difference *There is no Power but of God: the Powers that be, are ordained of God. He is the Miniſter of God to thee for good, he beareth not the Sword in vain, for he is the Miniſter of God, a Revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil,* Rom. 13. 1, 3, 4. Should the King immortal, eternal Exerciſe the Authority by himſelf, we are not now able to endure his glorious Preſence: We cannot ſee him and live. When he revealed himſelf upon Mount *Sinah*, and *all the People ſaw the Thunderings and Lightnings, and the noiſe of a Trumpet, and the Mountain ſmoaking, and when the People ſaw it, they removed and ſtood afar off; and they ſaid unto Moſes, ſpeak with us and we will hear, but let not God ſpeak with us, leaſt we die,* Exod. 20. 18, 19. *We walk by Faith, and not by Sight,* 2 Cor. 5. 7. it would be no Tryal of our obedience, if he ſhould appear viſible upon Earth, at whoſe ſight all Nations muſt tremble. God hath ordered it as it is, *Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth my Footſtool.* He commandeth over all, And ſtill *the Moſt High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will,* Dan. 4. 32. He hath ſent his

his Deputies among us, Spiritual and Civil, whom though he hath been pleased to Honour with his own Title of *Gods* and *Lords*, yet they are in the likeness of Men.

The World cannot subsist without Government, for since there are in us the Seeds of all manner of Evil, and especially those which are prejudicial to Society; Pride, Revenge, Envy, Hatred, Malice, Oppression, Theft, Covetousness and such like; if these were not restrained by present Punishments (for who do not regard God, fear these) there would be no living amongst Men. We must lurk in Dens and Caves of the Earth, to hide and preserve our selves from wrong and injury: We are worse then Bears and Wolves, Tygers and Serpents, for they do not bite and devour those of their own kind; whereas Man is ready to do all kind of hurt to his Fellow, if none would fall upon himself. If there was no Law to bind him, then his Strength would be the only Law of Justice. The good things of the Earth would not be distributed according to right or deserving, but fall a prey to the Sons of Violence. There would be no Trade or Commerce, for then People would not barter for Commodities, but take them by force. When the mighty Man hath got them, there comes a stronger then he and spoileth him also, and a third trys to Master him A gap would be opened to all Rapine and Injustice, and none could say that any thing he did possess was his own. *Men are as the Fishes of the Sea, if they have no Ruler over them.* Upon the least Provocation, or without any (for a malicious mind will seek occasion, which may be easily found) they would destroy and hurt one another Our lives would be in continual jeopardy of mercilesS Men. Something we have spoken or done, misconstrued, surmised or falsly accused, would render us liable to anothers Strife and Cruelty. We are by Nature Children of Wrath, of him whose *Name in the Hebrew Tongue is* Abaddon, *but in the Greek Tongue hath his Name* Apollyon, Rev. 9. 11. We are rather descendants from *Cain*, then the *Cadmean* Seed. Even now wilful Murther is punished by an accursed Death, yet still it is too often practised among us, but if it were reserved only to the future Judgment of God (that being at a distance, and not believed by reprobate Minds, or thinking to come off there by a slight and superficial Repentance in the mean while) too many moved by a revengeful or covetous Appetite, would no more stick to shed Blood, then refuse meat when hungry. in Wars H. b. 1. 14.

(where all Laws, Juſtice, Reaſon, and Humanity are baniſhed) what Butchering of one another there is? What ſtrange Inſtruments of Death they have invented, being Witty to mutual Deſtruction? They ſpoil Countreys, ſend the devouring flames into Vaſeys of Corn that before did Laugh and Sing, plunder poor People of their Cattel and Livelihood, ruſh violently into Houſes and rob of all. They kill and ſlay, have uſed unheard Cruelties towards Women and innocent Children, who ſhould have been Objects of Compaſſion and not of fury. The fineſt Cities are turned into ruinous heaps, and laid in Aſhes; all things are converted into Deſolation. They inſult over poor Captives, binding them with Miſery and Iron, feeding them with Bread and Water of affliction. What Pity it is, that Man who is endued with ſuch rational and excellent Principles, and thereby exalted above the rank of Beaſts; yet ſhould Act ſuch mad things? As if they were not otherwiſe ſubject to Miſeries enough, but they bring more upon their own Head. We ſee how far the Corruption in us would go (if not hindred) even to all manner of Evil; and iniquity like a mighty Torrent would bear down all before it. If Men were left to themſelves, and might do what was right in their own eyes (as they were once in ſuch a Condition, when there
Judg. 19. was no King in *Iſrael*, as is declared before the moſt horrible Relation ever done under the Sun) there would be nothing but Tribulation and Anguiſh, Weeping and Lamentation through the Earth: continual Fears would ariſe from the ſtrivings of the People. But Bleſſed be our God, who ſtilleth the noiſe of the Waves when they ariſe, and ruleth the raging of the Sea, and the madneſs of the People: If that had no bounds it would quickly over-ſpread the Face of the Earth, and the other if not kept in, would bring an univerſal Deluge, not only *upon the Ungoaly*, but the Servants of God, and the Compaſs of this lower World would be one entire *Aceldama*, a Field of Blood. *He hath ſent Kings and Governours for the Puniſhment of evil doers, and for the praiſe of them that do well*, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14.

The Word which God ſent unto the Children of Iſrael, preaching Peace by Jeſus Chriſt, he is Lord of all, Acts 10. 36. Amongſt other Duties doth Command ſubmiſſion to Kings and Magiſtrates, and forbids the contrary. No Rebellion whatſoever is lawful: A real good end will not ſanctifie it, much leſs thoſe falſe and ſpecious Ones wherewith it is often accompanied. It is a ſlanderous Report of

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the Goſpel, *That ſome affirm thereof, as if it did allow to do evil, that good may come*, Rom. 3. 8. God revealed himſelf otherwiſe of Old. *He is the Rock, his Work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he*, Deut. 32. 4. *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. *For I the Lord love judgment, I hate Robbery for Burnt-offering*, Iſa. 61. 8. *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?* Job 13. 7. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Pſal. 145. 17. More Texts might be alledged to manifeſt, that his Glory is not to be advanced by ſinful means. Indeed this cannot be, for it would be contrary to his infinite purity and uprightneſs, with whom dwells no ſhadow of Evil.

But Experience hath diſcovered, that when ſome have deſigned Rebellion for their own Ambition, Intereſt and Revenge, they must have a Fig-leave to hide it from ſimple People, whom they draw on their ſide: And what can be better then *Abſolons* Vow, Religion and the Glory of God as hath been the method of former Ages; this hath been made uſe of as a Pretence to further their own damned Enterprizes. Good God! That thy Name ſhould be ſo abuſed by vile Miſcreants, that thou who doſt abhor, and haſt *revealed thy Wrath againſt all unrighteouſneſs of Men*, ſhouldſt be made uſe of to Patronize it; as if thou wert ſuch an one thy ſelf. I am aſtoniſhed to think of this horrible perverting of thy Ways and Nature. Men would not dare do thus, but *thou holdeſt thy Tongue*, Hab. 1. 13. Otherwiſe there could be no Tryal, whither they would do thus or not. But notwithſtanding all the Practices of wicked Hypocrites (through which Strangers and the Ignorant may miſ-apprehend the God whom we ſerve) thou wilt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and clear when thou judgeſt at the laſt and great day. And even now thou art in this, and all other Matters as thou ſpeakeſt in thy Word.

2 Sam. 15. 8. 11.

Rom. 1. 18.

The Author of the New Teſtament obſerved by his own Example, what he taught and commanded to others; when he was betraved into the hands of wicked Men, though he could have had more then twelve Legions of Angels, yet made not the leaſt oppoſition. He was the Son of God, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and conſequently exempt from paying of Tribute to them; yet rather then he would give offence, he wrought a Miracle for the Payment thereof. And hath left this ſtanding Com-

Mat. 17.

mandment to all his Followers, *Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesars*, Mat. 22.21. which is more particularly explained, *Rom.* 13. *Render therefore to all their Dues, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour. He must needs be subject, not only for Wrath but for Conscience sake.* These things are as much due to the Supreme Magistrate, as it is from a Child to a Parent; he hath Right to them from his Subjects, as they have to their own Goods or Estate. The Doctrine of Loyalty and Obedience to Governors is laid down in as plain Terms, as any other Duty in the Gospel; and are sufficient to convince him, who Acts in Sincerity and Truth.

But those which are *Presumptuous, Self-willed*, 2 Pet. 2. 10. of turbulent and factious Spirits, have found out some little and trifling Evasions against these express Texts. There is a way in the World of putting Interpretations, when there is no more need of them, then of the most plain obvious Expression: But this is a Trick either to wrest, or *make the Commandments of God of none effect*. The wicked thus vindicate or palliate their Transgression, and others in alike manner justifie Rebellion. Let all Men in general remember and take heed, that the great Lawgiver, when every one comes to give Account before him, will not be trifled with. Such ways and devices will not now pass in Humane Courts and Judicatories. They have so much the more to Answer for, by prevaricating the way of the Most High; making his Word as it were a Nose of Wax (some have Blasphemously called it so) to stamp any Impression, and mould it to any shape as serves their base Sinister turns: In the end such Men will find, that the All-wise God will not be outwitted by them. The Criminals are not to make their own Construction of the Laws, against which they have offended, but must receive according to his righteous Judgment, when what is written, *Rom.* 1. 18. *Rom.* 2. 8. Shall be executed, and found true.

Thus some (who seem to be Religious) Confess, Men ought to pay Obedience unto Governours; but then they say, these Commands extend only to those Kings who love Christ, and themselves live obedient to his Law. And whether they do or not, private Persons are made Judges; and if they think such an one doth not, Subjects may lawfully disobey and rebel against him. If this should be granted, No King howsoever good or righteous would be safe in his Person; for so apt are Men in judging the worst,

worſt, eſpecially of thoſe above them, that they would cenſure him to be a prophane Prince or Hypocrite. If he was another *David*, a man after Gods own heart (why he was hated and ſpoken againſt) he would not be after their liking. Then they would not have this Man reign over them; they will outwardly conclude him to be an Enemy to Jeſus, and pronounce it as lawful to deſtroy him as Bears and Wolves. Whether he is ſo or not, an uncharitable Opinion or falſe Accuſation is ſufficient ground with them to kill the Lords Anointed, againſt whom none could lift up his hand and be guiltleſs. This hath been the Divinity of ſome, and miſchievous in its effects; but let it be examined by that word, which is to try the Doctrines whether they be of Men or no.

Chriſt delivered that command of Obedience to Magiſtrates at that very time when an Heathen Emperor was in the Throne, when *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* were ſubordinate Governours; when he was Sentenced to Death by unjuſt judgment, *Peter* would have hindred the execution, but was commanded to put up his Sword in the Sheaf. His Apoſtles Preached the ſame Doctrine after the Kings of the Earth ſtood up, and the Rulers were gathered together againſt the Lord, and againſt his Chriſt; which doth manifeſt that ſome have interpreted the Goſpel contrary to what the firſt Founders of it intended, and have put that reſtriction which they never deſigned. O ye perverters of the meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, What authority have ye to do theſe things? By your expoſitions and gloſſes, you have diminiſhed from the univerſal obligation of the commands; Wherefore do you make diſtinctions, where the Law maketh none? To come to the Old Teſtament wherein ye ſo much truſt, what do ye think of *Saul* from whom God had rent the Kingdom, and gave it to one better then he? and though *Saul* did ſeek after his life, yet *Davids* faithfulneſs and duty to him may be ſeen, 1 *Sam.* 24. 5, 6. 2 *Sam.* 1. There were many wicked Kings in *Iſrael*, yet to none did the people hence take occaſion to rebel, or refuſe their lawful injunctions; neither is the leaſt intimation from Gods Word ſo to do. It was not becauſe they were Jews, and ſo *the anointed of the Lord*, but even *Cyrus* a Gentile is thus called, *Iſa.* 45. 1 And unto *Nebuchadnezzar God gave the Kingdom*, Dan. 2. 37. So they are indefinitely called *Gods Miniſters*, Rom. 13. 6. It is not ſaid of that ſingle one, but all in general; The Kings

rule

rule ſeveral Countrys, but over them all is the Great King of the whole Earth, *the Lord and Governour of the World.*

Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy People, Acts, 23. 5. Upon no account, although he doth what he ſhould not. In the original place, *Exod.* 22. 28. It is doubtly forbid to lay on greater enforcement. How can Men over-look ſuch plain places, when they are quick enough to ſpie out any thing that may be wreſted to ſerve their wrong deſigns? When they meet with ſuch, they have ſet their brains on work for a plauſible interpretation to delude the hearts of the ſimple. They neglected *to put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magiſtrates*, Tit. 3. 1. Whereas if they could bring any thing out of the Old Teſtament, *of zeal for the Lord of Hoſts* and fighting his Battles, this was managed with all their skill and dexterity, to ſtir up Sedition and Rebellion; but for thoſe againſt them they did either omit, or faſten their own ſence quite turning that of the Holy Spirit. To apply *Mal.* 2. 7, 8. *The Prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts. But thoſe departed out of the way, they have cauſed many to ſtumble at the Goſpel by Preaching contrary thereunto, they have corrupted the covenant of Levi, and been partial in the Law*; otherwiſe they could not turn Religion into Rebellion, for this doth not allow the leaſt Wickedneſs, ſo neither that which is the greateſt ſin, that is ordinarily committed againſt Man.

It is againſt the immediate Ordinance of God, which he doth commonly puniſh and defeat in this life; One would think, Men might have taken warning by them that *periſhed at the gain-ſaying of* Core, how the Earth opened and ſwallowed them up, as if not fit to live above ground, who would have diſturbed that order and government there. Though this was ſet forth for an Example, for all that hereafter ſhould act rebelliouſly, yet the Spirit of diſobedience hath ſo worked in the minds of Men, that they have not refrained from doing the ſame things. Every Age ſince hath produced inſtances of thoſe, who have not dyed a death common to Men; It would be endleſs to Number all the Traytors that have been in our own Nation, I am unwilling to accuſe mine own Country Men, but I am afraid we are a reproach to our Neighbours, that we are a rebellious Country, and Enemies to Kings as by our Records and Hiſtories it doth appear. If we

Jude 11.

Ezza. 4. 15.

conſult

conſult them, we find that ſeveral have came to a miſerable and untimely end; If the buſineſs of *Dathan* and *Abiram* was afar of, and long ſince, theſe are later and come home. What it in our own Memory ſome have been deſtroyed in a rebellious War, others dyed like Dogs, and had their Carcaſes hanged up for a Spectacle. The Apoſtle 1 Cor. 10. mentioneth the puniſhment which fell upon the Jews, to dehort others from thoſe ſins which were the occaſion thereof; ſo that may be here repreſented according to Truth which fell upon them, that we may not commit Rebellion as ſome of them committed, and fell, and became as the dung of the Earth. All theſe things happened for enſamples, and are written for the admonition of thoſe that come hereafter.

One muſt be moved with indignation to hear *the Enemies of the Lord Blaſpheme*, and *the way of Truth evil ſpoken of*, to which nothing hath given greater occaſion then the carriage of the pretended Religious, eſpecially in two things, Diſloyalty to the State and knavery between Man and Man. Then which nothing is more forbidden in Scripture, which, if rightly underſtood and obeyed, would make the beſt Men and the beſt Subjects in the World; he who lives accordingly is an Enemy to none, much leſs to him whom God hath placed over his people.

Government is as neceſſary to the well being of the body politick, as health to the Natural. The ligatures and ſtrings do hold together the ſeveral parts, ſo that doth joyn the Members of the Common-wealth dependant and ſubordinate one to the other, and prevents that confuſion which would otherwiſe enſue. Every Man enjovs his own, his Perſon Fame and Eſtate are preſerved from wrong and injury, he hath all the outward good which can be deſired in this World. God hath in a wonderful manner from time to time been pouring forth his benefits upon the undeſerving Sons of Men; he hath given all his Law to make us happy, and excellently contrived that part which relates to keeping up that order which he did firſt eſtabliſh among us. The whole courſe of nature is a Lecture on this Subject of Government, ſo thoſe which would have none, muſt *turn the World up-ſide down*. Who dares ſuch a ſtrange attempt? But as there have been unuſual and prodigious Comets, which have blazed for a while, and threatned deſtruction; ſo there have not been wanting incendiaries here below, who endeavoured to ſet the

Earth

Earth on a Combuſtion, but themſelves at laſt were conſumed in flame they kindled. There have been ſome Enemies to all Government, but very few: All Mankind of every Country, Nation, and Language (who have not extinguiſhed their reaſon, nor been transformed into the Satyrs of the Wilderneſs) have always had among them ſome kind or other; when they have pulled down one Form, they have ſet up another: There is no living amongſt Men without any.

But this ſort of alteration is commonly long before accompliſhed, and there are in the mean while violent contentions among the people; ſome crying for this, and another for that, and perhaps none know wherefore. Then the word is drawn againſt our own Country Men, *One is daſhed againſt another, even the Fathers and the Sons together*, Neighbours and Kinſfolks purſuing one another to death; *for every battle of the Warriour is with confuſed noiſe, and garments rolled in blood.* We may ſee goodly perſonages wallowing in their own gore, trodden under foot and no Man to regard them; we may hear the cruel inſtruments of death bellowing forth woe and deſtruction, the ſkreeks and groans of dying Men. *There is a multitude of ſlain, and a great number of carcaſſes, they ſtumble upon their carcaſſes*; a real landskip of miſery, occaſioned by their own ſin and folly. They thought it at firſt a fine and gainful thing to be diſturbers of a quiet ſtate, and it is to be feared further on, for *ſeditions exclude Men out of the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5 20, 21.

Jer. 13. 14.

Iſa. 9. 5.

Nahum. 3. 3.

So they hinder future happineſs, and alſo the preſent both as to others and themſelves; ſuch have an inward fret, and are tormented at (as they think) the ill adminiſtration of publick affairs. Like ſick ſtomachs which turn ſweet into bitter, ſo their fancy doth miſrepreſent even the good and juſt actions of thoſe in Authority. They have a ſtrange art of interpreting all things to the worſe, ſo when they come to conſider and chew the cud, they reliſh nothing but bitterneſs; they ſpend their days in Sorrow, which is wholly their own fault, and their life becomes uneaſie to them. If they have ſome natural courage (which in proper acceptation is not, for they cannot bear the preſent evil and run blindly into the other) they conclude death is rather to be choſen. When this principle is once taken up, then through inſtigation of the Devil (who is never wanting when he hath opportunity of ſuggeſting miſchief) they form deſperate deſigns,

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not caring for their own, they will attempt anothers life; and him they lay in wait for, whom they vainly and falſly think the Author of all their miſery, reaſoning within themſelves: If their wicked imaginations ſhould take effect, then they ſhall be eaſed of all their grief, but if they ſhould miſcarry, they would be freed from a wretched life, which before was ſo grievous that they can as willingly endure it to be taken away by the hands of an Executioner, as their own. And indeed if it was not for the ſucceeding Eternity, theſe *Sons of* Belial, theſe accurſed Traytors were wiſe in their undertaking; but they are blinded, or holden up by Wine and Pride as not to conſider of this; or otherwiſe they would never by ſuch ſteps aſcend up to this high crime.

The Law is good if a Man uſe it lawfully, knowing this that the Law is not made for a righteous Man, but for the lawleſs and diſobedient; for thoſe that deſpiſe dominion, ſpeak evil of dignities, and do thoſe things which are contrary to ſound Doctrine, the peace of their Country and themſelves. Who will be neither convinced by Scripture, nor Reaſon, nor Self-love muſt be concluded under the number of thoſe obſtinate Souls, with whom nothing prevails. The Spirit that luſts to Rebellion is too far ingraſted in them; but ſurely none is come to ſuch a degree of evil Principles, for then it would be as vain to ſay any thing more to ſuch, as to waſh the *Ethiopian* White. And it would be equally abſurd to compare theſe with the Loyal and Obedient, who are more happy in this life, as to confer bitter with ſweet; for theſe have that acquieſcence of mind which was once in the *Iſraelites* (who were ſo for a Novelty, which they were always obliged to be in duty) *Whatſoever the King did, pleaſed all the People*, 2 Sam. 3. 36. 1 Tim. 8, 9, 10, 11.

But it may be ſurmiſed, What if our Rights and Liberties ſhould be invaded, and thoſe in Authority ſhould take too much upon them, as to become Arbitrary Unjuſt and Tyrannical? Object.

This is the reaſoning of fleſh and blood againſt the Commandments of the Goſpel, and in like manner againſt forgiving Injuries. We are not to go according to the dictates of *Fleſhly Wiſdom*, or of natural and preſent preſervation to inherit the Kingdom of God; To ſubmit to a light inconvenience for that, is very conſiſtent with true prudence: But this is an Argument Anſw.

from an abuſe which may happen, and if that were ſufficient to condemn or ſurceaſe a thing, we might do ſo as to all, for nothing is ſo excellent in its own Nature, but may be corrupted: Not one obligation or duty to God or Man, but a ſeeming miſchief may enſue upon it. He hath been pleaſed to try our obedience in ſuch kinds of relation, if we do our parts, we may expect the good and recompence thereof; others are to perform theirs at their peril or encouragement. *Againſt a King there is no riſing up*, Prov. 30. 31. *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power, and who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Eccleſ. 8. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned*, Pſal. 51. 4. Said *David* in his confeſſion to God for the Murther of *Uriah*, which ſhews he was accountable to him only for that wicked Action. In the New Teſtament is a poſitive command of Chriſt, *Mat.* 5. 39. *But I ſay unto you, that ye reſiſt not evil*, which extends to what is done by thoſe who have dominion over us, and an injury offered by a private perſon. Yet I will not be afraid to ſpeak out, if either ſhould take advantage over Paſſive Obedience, or the forgiving temper as to domineer or affront the more, it is baſeneſs in the mean while; and it will be determined who acts beſt, they who go according to the dictates of corrupted nature, which is Proud and Cruel; or who have it corrected by the *Wiſdom from above* which makes it *pure, peaceable, gentle and eaſy to be intreated*, Jam. 3. 17. Let them be never ſo great in their own Opinion, they are but Men: And there is one above, *who ſhall cut off the Spirit of Princes, he is terrible to the Kings of the Earth*, Pſal. 76. 12. When they rage moſt, he can put a hook in their Jaws, and lead them back from their purpoſes, ſee *Iſa.* 37. 29. *Ezek.* 29. 4. *Dan.* 4. ch. & ch. 11. 36. *Hoſ.* 7. 16. *Heb.* 11. 27. If it be his good pleaſure, he can ſave his people from their violence, or turn them into the *rod of his anger*, *Iſa.* 10. 5. And then we are patiently to ſuffer, knowing who ſtriketh, and learn by his judgment to be reformed from our ſins; we may ſend up Prayers and Tears to him, *in whoſe hand is the heart of the King, and he turneth it whereſoever he will.* God can either alter his thoughts, or ſuffer him to fall by an Accident, or Sickneſs, or which way it pleaſeth his Almighty Wiſdom. *Again they are miniſhed and brought low through Oppreſſion, Affliction, and Sorrow. He poureth contempt upon Princes*, Pſal. 107. 39. 40. He can do it without our aſſiſtance, he doth then more magnifie his own Power, neither are we to break

break his commands, for then we juſtly *ſuffer as Evil-doers*, 1 Pet. 4. 15, 16.

It was hardly ever known, that people did endure much for being good Subjects; or if any thing, yet not to be compared with what came upon them by being otherwiſe. None is puniſhed for living peacably but ſeditiouſly in the State, or through falſe accuſation he is reputed ſo. Loyalty is not eſteemed nor proceeded againſt as a crime; if any ſuffer innocently in life, member or goods, that is commonly through corruption of witneſſes or ſubordinate Miniſters, which Government and Juſtice is to prevent. The King is bound by Oath to keep Righteouſneſs, and Miniſter true Judgment unto his People; for the obſervation or neglect of which he is to give account. Thoſe ſeeds of evil within, make all the diſturbance in the World; which are provided againſt by the grace of him who is greater then *Solomon*, and then all people might dwell ſafely, every Man under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree from one end of the Earth to the other, all the days of our Kings and Governours. 1 Kings 4. 25.

Of the Perſon of Kings.

To come unto him, who is the great inſtrument of our External Peace and Happineſs; *Under his ſhadow we live*, Lam. 4. 20 This perſon is not moſt happy (though great in Power and Majeſty) of any in his Realm. He preſides over many violent and rotten Members, who would make a Schiſm in the body, and ſay unto the Head (O Monſtrous Folly!) We have no need of thee. *But now God hath ſet the Members, every one of them in the body, as it hath pleaſed him*, 1 Cor. 12. 18. Yet the inferior are not pleaſed, becauſe they were not ſupreme or higher: And therefore will diſplace, or diſturb. So the principle part is obliged to ſtand on continual guard, to keep it ſelf ſecure and others in their due ſubjection; they are apt to mutiny among themſelves, which this is to ſuppreſs, and take care for all the other Members. It cannot have much leiſure to reſt, the Enemies being ſo near, and its buſineſs ſo great; We ſhould let him be ſecure by whom we enjoy ſecurity, he ſees that others do not moleſt us, ſo ingenuity and gratitude require us to do nothing againſt his Royal Perſon, State, or Dignity. But ſeeing his great Maſter in Heaven hath evil recompenſed for good, even from thoſe who are the work of his hands, and ſubſiſt upon him every moment; the King may expect, that notwithſtanding all the good he doth to

his Subjects and fellow-Creatures, yet ſome will be his Enemies. Indeed the malice of Men cannot reach the Moſt High, and if it might, could not hurt him; yet it may hurt the Son of Man as he is; and therefore hath guards to defend himſelf, which do ſomewhat keep off outward violence, yet it muſt be a Melancholy reflection that the meaneſt ſubject hath more ſafety of his life then himſelf. Thence ariſe fears: And further his life is wearied with publick buſineſs, which require the greateſt ſtudy and labour of mind; Vexation is at hearing ill News and adverſe Accidents, which bring carefulneſs and anxiety much greater then what his Subjects have in their ſeveral callings, as the Object is of more concern and importance. Thoſe hard and difficult things of Government do occaſion more wearineſs and interruption, then he who daily goeth forth to his work until the Evening; fixedneſs of thought doth more tire then labour of the hands, ſo he hath his portion of Care and Sorrow with the reſt of Mankind.

But then his Pleaſures do as much exceed them: That Royal Pomp and Grandeur, his Nobles, Courtiers, Friends and honeſt Subjects do all ſtudy to make his life as happy as poſſible. He hath all Recreations the Wit of Man can invent, choice Meats, delicious Liquor, variety and beauty of Women, the moſt excellent Converſation, great diverſity of News, and remarkable Occurrences. Then he hath great Poſſeſſions, Riches, ſtately Palaces, Gardens, Furniture, and wants nothing of the Conveniency and Pleaſures of Life.

Indeed if the World, and the things of this World can make a Man happy, then he muſt be ſo, who hath them all at his Command and Service; Certain it is, they make a greater appearance outwards, then have real content and ſatisfaction. That goodly retinue (which others ſo much admire) himſelf eſteems as a thing of neceſſity and courſe. At length he doth not perceive half the pleaſure as the common Spectators; even theſe by often ſeeing diminiſh in their eſteem, for the moſt excellent ſenſible objects by frequency tire. The reverence from his Subjects is but their Duty and Homage they ow unto him; this alſo by repeated and ſucceſſive acts doth leſſen into none or a very little delight. He is only the viſible Fountain of Honour, yet not of Happineſs; for they are not convertible terms: If all Happineſs did meet and concenter in him, there would be no more

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need for others ſtudying to make him Happy, then for the Rays to convey up light to the Sun. Notwithſtanding all their Labour, this good and perfect Gift cometh down from the Father of Lights, and it is not in the Power of any to beſtow it. They may indeed light up Candles, ſomewhat take off from the Horrour of Darkneſs and Miſery; but this Light doth not ſhine as perfect day; neither is the Happineſs they Subminiſter, like that which proceeds from the Son of Righteouſneſs. Courtiers and Favourites provide for their Maſter what Pleaſure the World affords, but cannot bring alſo a new Reliſh and Appetite. They cannot take away that Irkſomeneſs, which ariſes from having the ſame Divertiſements over ſo often. Let them wrack their Brains never ſo much, they cannot always ſupply him with new Variety; and then they cannot help, but he will grow weary of them. The ſame delight they provide for him, he hath enjoyed already; let them find out ſome new thing, or draw out that ſatiating Nature in the old. Dreſs it ſeveral ways, it is but the ſame Diſh in ſubſtance ſtill; and freſh invented Sauces will not cure the loathing of a full Stomach. The Pleaſure of eating is when one is hungry, otherwiſe the Taſte of Dainties is no more then of the white of an Egg. The being accuſtomed makes them ſavour as common Meat, if never ſo ſweet, it continues only in the mouth, which is ſo ſhort that it muſt be a mean and Paltry Happineſs that depends upon ſo Tranſitory a thing. The Taſte of pleaſant Liquors periſhes in the draught, and afterwards ſeems as if not received in; but if the immoderate uſe makes an Alteration in the Man, it is a drunken fit, and the utmoſt good which ariſes from that, is to be examined in another place. As Chap. 7. for that of fair Women is no advantage (Conjugal love except) unleſs he gives himſelf over to ſinful unbounden Luſt; the Conſideration of which is referred to *Chap.* 8. This is one of the Pleaſures of ſin for a Seaſon, which *deſtroyeth Kings*, Prov. 31. 3. as well as other Men. No unlawful delights can render a Man truly Happy, but contrariwiſe miſerable in reference to his future State. Even now they do not yield a ſincere Satisfaction. Company is one of the moſt noble Pleaſures of a reaſonable Creature, yet if one is continually therein (as ſuch is the Condition of Princes) it doth not always refreſh, but is tireſome. There muſt be ſome intermiſſion from Worldly delights, or they will not Reliſh. It is more Eligible to be ſometimes alone then in a Croud;

Croud; he cannot esteem the sweetness of Conversation, who never knows the want thereof: If there be an intermixture and Succession, both contraries are pleasant; but otherwise neither is. Let the Men you converse withal be of great Endowments of Wisdom and Eloquence, if skilled in all the Arts of rendring themselves good Company and acceptable to others, yet by continuance with them the Admiration will diminish till it comes to nothing. In all visible things under the Sun, there is a satiety and wearineſs. Even the continual hearing of News is no Novelty, and though several things do happen, yet they are but the same under little differing Circumstances, acted by Persons of other Names, but in substance the same which hath been already; so this Variety doth not still recreate: Fine Buildings, Plantations, and other magnificent Works please a little at first, but in Process of time not at all. Lastly, what is reckoned worth all, abundance of Gold and Silver; This doth serve only for the procurement of the things spoken of, and if they do not afford a true Happiness, much less will the other. The reason hereof may be learned from *Hab.* 2. 13. *Jer.* 17. 13. and other places of Scripture, which discover the vast Capaciousness of the Soul, its proper End, and the Vanity of the Creature. We are designed for more noble things, then what are here before us. We are built up, and to be prepared for the Mansions above: And least we should be stopped in the way thither, as we pass through this wilderness, God hath suffered it to be barren and dry of the Water of true Comfort. Such as is to be had here, may a little refresh us in our Pilgrimage, but cannot throughly satisfie our Thirst, for that is only to be done there, where he bids us come, *Isa.* 55. 1, 2. *John* 7. 37. That we may be the more quickened to come when he calleth us, he hath so ordered the matter, that if we set at naught his Gracious invitation, and going through this vale of Misery use it for a Well, sit down and tarry here, yet most have not to draw with, that is such means; but who have, yet the Well is deep; it is trouble to draw up, and when we have drunk of it, we shall Thirst again. Do what we will, if we only seek herein, we shall never satisfie our Desires; nothing here can do it, they must cease after Earthly things, and be turned unto the Heavenly. But if we confine them here, though we do pour in upon them, we are therefore no more Happy, then one in a continual Thirst, because he hath drink

John 4. 11. 13.

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as often as he calls for it. The things of this Life may for the preſent a little ſtop our Deſires, but do not take off the * craving ſomewhat more. We ſtill covet after drink, and yet are weary of drinking. We uſe the things of this World, and that not giving us content, we try whether the abuſe of them will, but then we are deceived in our Expectations, and the ſooner wax weary of them. They are inſufficient; *For the Creature was made ſubject to Vanity, not willingly* (for any fault of her own, rather our Tranſgreſſion) *but by reaſon of him, who ſubjected the ſame in Hope. Becauſe the Creature it ſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption*, Rom. 8. 20, 21. God willing to retrieve poor loſt Men, ſent his Son to dye for us, and make known thoſe better things; and leaſt we ſhould be detained by the preſent, hath rendred them hungry and empty. We have here no Satisfaction, but ſeek one to come.

* Which too many know not for what that is, but it is not in vain, neither was it deſigned for our torment.

Alas! For all things are ſo, we are too apt to reſt on the Creature and expect Contentment from it; but if we could once find that, we ſhould go no further, fix here and never come to the place God hath appointed for us. He is pleaſed (Oh infinite Condeſcention) to let us ſeek abroad, if we can find better Entertainment; and if after a vexatious and dangerous Purſuit, we meet with nothing but *Huſks* (which may fill, but cannot ſatisfie; which are meat for Swine, but not fit and commenſurate for reaſonable Creatures) we would *return unto our Fathers Houſe, where is bread enough, and to ſpare*; not ſuch as the World giveth, but *which he giveth from Heaven, that bread of Life unto which who ſo cometh, ſhall never hunger.* Here he feedeth us with the Bread of Tears; we eat in the ſweat of our brow, having Labour and Sorrow intermingled, and afterwards we hunger again. But if we would pray unto him, *evermore to give us that*, know and accept it when offered, (for want whereof thoſe in *John* 6. 34, 35. miſſed it, and others at this day) that is *unleavened* not ſowred with Worldly Care, a ſpiritual *Manna* ſuitable to our Taſte, fills our Souls with Gladneſs, and endureth unto everlaſting Life. That we ſhould come and partake, is the deſign of our Heavenly Father: *Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things*, Pſal. 103. 5. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*, Pſal. 81. 10. Stretch out thy Deſires to their due extent, a little Earneſt and Reliſh is given, they are now quieted with Faith and Hope, and Patience; but will be eternally and fully ſatisfied with the things ſignified under them.

Luke 15.

Joh. 6. 34, 34, 35.

But

But if they are not pointed this way: *They shall eat, but not have enough.* Why so? Because, *they have left off to take heed unto the Lord. Whoredom, and Wine, and new Wine take away the heart,* Hos. 4. 10, 11. and yet nothing but he can throughly satisfie it. The World counts such like things the principal Happiness of Man. But I appeal to them who have all Plenty, Whether all put together, will amount to a satisfaction. When you have eat and drunk of your Delicacies, will they make you sincerely Merry? Go to you that have abundance, study all ways to delight your selves, deny nothing your Lusts crave for, pass away your time as pleasantly as you can, spend your wealth; but *remember that for all these things God will bring you to Judgment,* Eccles. 11. 9. In the very midst and throughout, you will weary your selves to commit iniquity, and at last will be more discontented then at the beginning, by adding a long Train of Sin and Guilt. Which will sit as an heavy Burthen, or if dead therein, and so not sensible of its weight, this comes near to a reprobate Sense, a Living to fill up the measure of iniquities. Which is no other advantage then that of respite, to find no true Comfort in the World, but spin out a wretched Life with foolish Toys and Diversions, till Death consigns over, where is no Stupefaction nor shadow of Refreshment. *Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, there is no Hope,* Isa. 57. 10. Thou art tired in looking out, and running after Satisfaction, yet will go on still to expect some, and not sit down perswaded there is none to be had in the things of this World; but this must be done, before Men cannot be led up to another Happiness, and seeing they cannot have it here, it is reasonable to seek diligently somewhere else for it; this Treasure is worth Ransacking every corner of the Earth for, yet not to be had, but by *lifting up above it.*

Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the Earth, Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling, Psal. 2. 10, 11. You must manifest your obedience and subjection unto him, *For the Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a Great God, Mighty and Terrible, which regardeth not Persons, nor taketh reward,* Deut. 10. 17. *Hear ye the word of the Lord, O Kings of Judah, and Inhabitants of Jerusalem,* Jer. 19. 3. So you are equally obliged to know his Law and Will, as the meanest of your Subjects. And upon refusal thereof, are to Answer before him.

him. The Officer, that is to hale before the Judge, enters into Palaces as common Windows. They are to behave themſelves with Submiſſion and Obedience in the mean while unto the Great Lord over all, to make their Reconciliation with him. This kind of Diſcourſe is ſlighted and piſhed at by Great Men, but it is Gods word and truth, and he reſents their Contempt as done to himſelf. And becauſe theſe pretend to put it off out of Courage and Boldneſs, make a ſhew to Laugh at the other World, yet if they do not really fear it, let them take a Proſpect of it in a dead Letter, for if they cannot do this, it is by Reaſon of the horrible dread within; but if they would, they might be ſecured from the Danger thereof. That is only to the Rebellious and Stubborn, which any one may chooſe to be. But if they continue ſo, let their Perſons be never ſo great, There is One mightier then they, as is manifeſted by the firſt Act we ſee, and more we read of. He that was ſurrounded with ſo many Attendants and Servants, ſhall deſcend alone into the Pit; and his Soul who before made the Nations tremble, ſhall leap out frighted in a perplexed Condition. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy Coming: It ſtirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief Ones of the Earth; it hath raiſed up from their Thrones all the Kings of the Nations; all they ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto thee, Art thou alſo become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?* Iſa. 14. 9, 10, 11. There is no more Priviledge for Kings then others: *The Lord on thy right hand ſhall ſtrike through Kings in the day of his wrath*, Pſal 110. 5. *And the Kings of the Earth hid themſelves in the Dens, and Rocks of the Mountains, and ſaid to the Mountains and Rocks fall on us. And hide us from the Face of him, that ſiteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his Wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to abide it?* Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17. The Lord of the ends of the Earth will fetch them forth of their lurking Holes. Who had Legions and Armies to fight for them, muſt appear before his Judgment Seat. *None of them can by any means redeem his Brother, nor give to God a Ranſom for him: for the Redemption of their Soul is precious, and it ceaſeth for ever*, Pſal. 49. 7, 8. Who was a Judge among the People, muſt now be Judged himſelf; Who ere-while Commanded, and gave Laws at his Pleaſure, is now brought into Subjection and himſelf tryed by the Law of the Moſt High. *For there is no reſpect of Perſons with God, for as many as have ſinned without Law,*

Ezek. 32. 25.

ſhall periſh without Law; and as many as have ſinned in the Law, ſhall be judged by the Law, Rom. 2. 11, 12. What is now Acting in the World, will be over; and when every one of us, one after another have done our parts, we muſt lay aſide all our Ornaments in the Wardrobe of the Grave. If we have done any good Works, theſe will follow us; but if ill, Guilt ſticks cloſe; one of theſe two is all we ſhall carry out of this World. None will have advantage over another, but it ſhall be done to all according to their deſervings. At that time the things with which we are now ſo affected, will be all paſſed away; and their remembrance as faint as a Night Viſion. It will not be the leaſt Comfort for them to call to mind, who *have lived in Pleaſure on the Earth, and been Wanton, and have nouriſhed their hearts, as in the day of ſlaughter; But who ſhall have the Teſtimony of their Conſcience, that in ſimplicity and Godly ſincerity, they had their Converſation in the World*, will find more rejoycing, then to have had the Dominion over mighty Kingdoms: If he that was a great Emperour, did not behave himſelf rightly towards God, whilſt he was in this place of Tryal; his Condition will be worſe then that of a Scullion, by reflecting from what a pitch of worldly Proſperity and Honour he is fallen. How will he endure to ſee himſelf become abject and baſe for ever, who before was had in ſuch reverence, that there could not be reſpect enough paid unto him? How will he fume and rage (and yet there is no Remedy) to ſee his *Principalities come down, and the Crown of his former Glory to be taken away*, Jer. 13. 18. and himſelf thruſt into an everlaſting Dungeon? For ſoftneſs and eaſe, to have Pain and Fire; for ſweet Smells the ſtench of Sulphur; for a Bed of Damask, to be rolled up and down in a ſtream of Brimſtone; for all manner of Muſick, to hear worſe noiſe then Screech Owls, or the yawling of Cats. All this muſt be a ſad Change. To Conſider, that he hath lived heretofore in all Splendour, will increaſe his Anguiſh of mind. The greateſt Perſon is as much obliged to be obedient unto God, as he that ſitteth upon the Dunghil. *Who will render to every Man according to his Deeds: To them who by Patient continuance in Well doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, eternal Life*, Rom. 2. 6, 7. The Gods of the Earth have the two firſt already, but not the laſt annexed to it. All their Goodlineſs is as the Flower of the Field, the Graſs withereth, the Flower fadeth, ſo likewiſe the Crown of their Glory fadeth away. The Head which bears it

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waxes old, or is laid in the Duſt before. *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help*; the Reaſon is added, *His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth, in that very day his Thoughts Periſh*; there is an utter end of all his Pomp and Greatneſs, *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help: whoſe Hope is in the Lord his God*, Pſal. 146. 3, 4, 5. That when all other things fail, he may be received up unto Glory. If he hath a right unto the Promiſes, that when he comes to leave his fine Cities, that of his own eſpecial Reſidence, all his Courtiers, *Now he is come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the Heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels. To the general Aſſembly, and Church of the firſt-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the New Covenant*, Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. What joy will he find among the Heavenly Hoſt? To have *David*, *Hezekiah*, *Conſtantine*, *Theodoſius*, and other righteous Kings gratulate his coming: With what joy will he give up his Account of ten Talents to the great King, and receive his Commendation with a proportionable Reward? His Authority is not taken away, but increaſed. He is not troubled at the Loſs of his worldly Grandeur and Pomp, for that was but as the ſhining of rotten Wood in a dark place, in Compariſon of what he now enjoys, which is ten thouſand times more by ſeeing the Lord of Glory. He did not put his Confidence in terreſtial Splendour, but uſing it as Convenient for the imperfection of that State. The good Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, had their Courts and Palaces. He took a great Care not to forget God, nor to be lifted up, but had an Eye all along upon the Glory which excelleth. *He ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy Houſe, and thou ſhalt make him drink of the River of thy Pleaſures, for with thee is the Fountain of Life*, Pſal. 36. 8, 9. And then he muſt look with Indignation and Contempt upon thoſe ſinful Delights, for which theſe are too often loſt. The Crown of Gold here hath a Croſs upon the top in token of Subjection to our crucified Lord; (but that is better manifeſted by doing the things he ſaith) and alſo it was a fit Emblem of the Concomitant trouble, for though beſet with precious Stones, it hath a Pungency like a Crown of Thorns. However, he muſt be more exceedingly pleaſed, when that which was Troubleſome and Corruptible is taken away, and there is ſet a Crown of pure

Rev. 21.

Jer. 22. 4.

Gold on his Head; a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away, and all this done unto him by God himſelf, whom before having Honoured, now he is pleaſed to Honour, 2 *Sam.* 2. 30. The King had here all Conveniences of Life, but did not place his chief Happineſs in them. He then received them with Prayer and Thank-giving, not abuſing them to ſin and wickedneſs; they are all paſt and over; now he is much more as an Angel of God, for he neither eats nor drinks, nor ſtands in need of thoſe things, which were given by reaſon of imperfection. The want of that Company below, is abundantly made up in the Communion of Saints; Here he converſed with thoſe of his own Generation and Countrey, but there is the gathering together of every Age ſince the World began, of every part who came from the Eaſt and Weſt, and are ſate down with *Abraham* in the Kingdom of God. Alſo they are *made Perfect*, and all thoſe things done away, which render Converſation unpleaſant in the World; There it is refined, all having thoſe excellent Qualities which endear each other, and make Society pleaſant. He had formerly ſufficient to defray the great Charges of his Kingdom, to preſerve it from Invaſion and Sedition, but Covetouſneſs is Idolatry, and expreſly forbidden to Kings, *Deut.* 17. 17. for the Reaſons there given. Neither by the Law of Juſtice is he to impoveriſh his People; and therefore to be avoided by him, who would come to the City of pure Gold; which belongeth to every Citizen, but is peculiar to none, as now is the Light of the Sun. Saith the Royal Pſalmiſt, *As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs*, Pſal. 17. 15. All Earthly and Senſual Happineſs hath been found vain and unſatisfactory; but the ſpiritual and heavenly is ſufficient to raiſe our utmoſt Affections and Duty to the Author thereof, *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* All the Endeavours and Wiſdom of the World could not find it out, *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10. Which ſpake by thoſe Holy Men of old, out of whoſe Writings this Deſcription hath been brought.

Theſe things are great and wonderful, but then it is ſurmiſed, they are diſtant and uncertain; and why ſhould Men foregoe preſent and ſenſible Pleaſures for future and imaginary?

Here

Here is the great objection of Mankind againſt the things of God and their own Happineſs; and therefore to preſs the word of Exhortation home, it is neceſſary to ſay ſomewhat towards the removal thereof. As for being afar off, that ſhould be no prejudice; for that which is future, will be as much preſent as the time now is. Time was when to day, which is called to day, was future, and yet this is preſent, as were thoſe which have been paſt. The next year is to come, and that will be here as the laſt was, for that alſo was once to come, and we ſee it hath already been. The day of death with us living is to come, and though it be ſo, none can be fooliſh to deny but that will as certainly be as was the day of our Birth. All this great buſineſs which is cryed up to be ſo much at a diſtance, is only till then; for albeit the perfect conſummation of bliſs and miſery will be after the general Judgment, and how it ſhall be with us immediately after Death, there is no plain Revelation, yet from *John* 9. 4. *Heb.* 9. 27. and alike places it appears, *As the Tree falls, ſo it lies*: As Death leaves one, ſo Judgment finds him; What therefore doth it ſignifie if the General Day be afar off, when the Day of our particular Death may be next Week, to Morrow, this very Night God may require our Soul? The body remains inſenſible in the Sleeping-Houſe of the Grave, yet it will be awaked from thence by the Trump of the Arch Angel. A Man would not go to ſleep very ſecurely, if he knew before hand he ſhould be rouzed by his Houſe burning about his ears; and of this we are aſſured that after our earthly Tabernacle is laid down, it riſeth up no more, *till the day of the Lord comes as a Thief in the Night*, 1 Theſ. 5. 2. *In the which the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth alſo and the Works that are therein ſhall be burnt up.* If we would be ſafe in that great day, we muſt before we go hence conſider and do well, that we may be worthy to eſcape and ſtand; the only ſtrength is innocence: *Seeing then theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought ye to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs? Looking for and haſting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the Heavens being on fire ſhall be diſſolved*, 2 Pet 3. 10, 11, 14. We daily approach nearer, to morrow then to day, and thus continually make towards it. Whether we Eat or Drink, Sleep or Play, our time paſſeth; and whether we think of it or not, we are always going to that ſtate in which time ſhall be

Mat. 25. 6.

be no more. How ſoon we may be there, we know not; but moſt certainly we ſhall be there at laſt. *Take ye heed, Watch and Pray, for ye know not when the time is*, Mark 13. 33. Who will not obey this Commandment, but be unmindful, go to ſleep and take their reſt, yet *their Damnation ſlumbereth not*; and if they put the evil day far from them, yet ſtill *their condemnation lingereth not*; and that will come do what they can. In the days of *Sodom* they did Marry and were given in Marriage, did not at all conſider the things which ſhould come upon them; nevertheleſs the Lord rained down Fire and Brimſtone. What are now become of all thoſe in the Generation with *Amos*, who would put the evil day far from them? Yet it is long ſince come, and they could not ſtave it off. Amos 6. Thoſe of the ſame mind in the time of our Fathers are all gone; and their careleſneſs could not preſerve them from the Pit of Deſtruction: They thought the very like what ſome do now, the things of another World were at a great diſtance and they need not mind them, yet they fell in unawares. We can no more think their miſery leſs, then who wilfully ſhut their Eyes and drop into a bottomleſs Gulph, whereas if they had kept them open, they might have ſeen and paſſed by it. *Like the evil Servant who ſaid in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming*, Mat. 24. 48. They had time enough and to ſpare on the Earth, therefore they would ſmite and oppreſs their Neighbours, eat and drink with the drunken. But the Lord came in a day when they looked not for him, and they are reſerved unto his juſt Judgment; if they might riſe from the dead again and have another day of grace and forbearance, they would be other kind of Men: They would take heed and not be ſurprized on a ſudden. But the decrees of Almighty God like himſelf are unchangeable, they were told of this before, and they might have accepted the good counſel of the Lord Jeſus; and therefore he is Righteous in his dealings towards Men. Who dyed in their ſins have no more place for repentance, for *he gave them a ſpace to repent, and they repented not*, Rev. 2. 21. But the living may as we are at this day, yet not better then our Fathers, we muſt ſhortly dye in like manner, and are to ſtand or fall to our own Maſter. We ſhall ſee another repreſentation of things then is now before us, one which openeth into the eternal Countrys, either *new Heavens and a new Earth wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs*, 2 Pet. 3. 13. Or a Land of Darkneſs, of the ſhadow of Death, a

place

place of Dragons and Scorpions, the inhabitation of Sin and Misery.

Yet a little while, and we ſhall be removed out of this place, and then we ſhall find that the things here ſpoken of (though they may at preſent *ſeem as idle tales*, Luke 24. 11.) will be real, and no fictions. Whoſoever believeth that God is true, and that thoſe things are ſo which he hath ſpoken by his holy Prophets, Son and Apoſtles, cannot otherwiſe then be convinced of the certainty of them even now. If ſo, nothing can be more effectual to perſwade: Men futurity will be no more an argument againſt them, then now it is againſt Mens going a Voyage to a Foreign Country, where it is ſeveral Months before they can reap any profit. The ſhortneſs of the time before, at leaſt by Death, the infallibility of that, the exceeding greatneſs of the concern ſhould take away all other diſadvantages; If we had but faith as a grain of Muſtard-ſeed, we ſhould remove Mountains which now hinder us to behold *the Land that is very far off*, Iſa. 33. 17. And for all the diſtance it would more affect us becauſe of its exceeding pleaſantneſs, then that our feet now tread on; if it doth not, it cometh to paſs becauſe of unbelief. *Nevertheleſs if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himſelf*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. *He hath provided a reſt for his people, and to whom ſware he that they ſhould not enter into his reſt, but to them that believed not*? Heb. 3. 18. They ſhall not only be deprived of that, but *ſhall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death*, Rev. 21. 8. Which they may as ſoon avoid by ſaying they do not believe any ſuch thing, as now they may a temporal evil by fancying ſtrongly it ſhall not come upon them. If they could make themſelves immortal by having a lively Faith that they ſhall not die, or if they were faſt bound to a Stake and a pile of Faggots kindled cloſe round about, and they could be preſerved from burning by a meer perſwaſion only, then alſo men might eſcape the damnation of Hell by only thinking there is no ſuch thing. To argue there is no God, becauſe the *Fool hath ſaid ſo in his heart*, Pſal. 14. 1. is as ridiculous as it would be for one to pretend to extinguiſh the light of the Sun by ſhutting his eyes. Let them think he is not, or he ſleepeth, doth not concern himſelf with the affairs of Mankind, yet himſelf hath ſaid, *I AM THAT I AM*, Exod. 3. 14. and declares

clares himſelf in that Magnificent manner, *Deut.* 32. 40, 41, 42, 43. So let all the world ſay to the contrary, it ſignifieth not: The word he hath ſpoken ſhall ſtand, and he will do according to it, let all mankind diſpute or think what they will. If they will not believe, they muſt periſh in their unbelief; if they do that, but will not give heed to obey the truth thereof, they alſo ſhall be puniſhed from the preſence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. Both theſe are follies ſo great that there wants a name to expreſs them, yet this laſt ſeems to be greateſt, for there are in Scripture ſuch forcible arguments to obedience, that who believes muſt be as abſolute a fool or madman if they do not work upon him, as he who refuſes a great Eſtate when offered, or run himſelf into a fire when he may paſs by and avoid it.

Go ye into all the World, and Preach the Goſpel to every Creature. He that believeth and is Baptized ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned, Mark 16. 15, 16. ſaid our Lord to his Diſciples: Which may prevent the Whiſpering of Court-Chaplains that Chriſt gave no command to Kings; if they are not Creatures, they have an immunity from Gods Law, otherwiſe not: When only in *Judah* God was known, he expected Obedience from the King thereof all one as from the People; yea rather more, for the ſpirit of God takes particular notice who ſerved him and who did not, with account of thoſe Mercies and Judgments they received accordingly, as every one knows who doth read the Old Teſtament. But now the fulneſs of time is come, to which belongs that Propheſie, *Kings ſhall be her nurſing Fathers, and Queens her nurſing Mothers*; It was ſome conſiderable time after Chriſt and his Apoſtles were upon the Earth, before any King or Emperour was converted to the Faith, and even now it is only ſo of one part of the World defaced with much Corruption, Wickedneſs, and Ignorance. So we are to expect a further and univerſal fulfilling of *Iſa.* 60 3. 11. *Pſal.* 72. 11. *Pſal* 102. 15. 22. *Rev.* 11. 15. and chap. 21. verſ. 24, 26. Themſelves are ſubject to the only Potentate, the King immortal, inviſible and only Wiſe God; if they are ſo freely he accepts thereof, but if they will reign wholly themſelves and not let him reign over them; if they do not *glorify the God in whoſe hand their breath is*, Dan. 5. 23. he will account with them when that is taken away, and manifeſt that he is ſtronger. They are Potſherds of the Earth, though of the largeſt ſize, yet between them and their Maker is but alike difference

(being

(being infinite in both) as between the High and Lofty one and the meaneſt Man. They came here to the ſame end and purpoſe as others, they alſo were deſigned to ſet forth the glory of God though in a more eminent manner; they are made to act according to his Laws, both as they relate to their private capacity as Men, and to the publick of Kings, as they muſt anſwer for themſelves to the Lord, *who is high above all the Earth, who is exalted far above all Gods*, Pſal. 97. 9.

Happy is he who doth comply with this will of the Almighty, *That hath learnt to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of his Law, and his Statutes to do them, whoſe heart is not lifted up above his Brethren, and doth not turn aſide from the Commandment to the right hand or to left, to the end he may prolong his days in his Kingdom, he and his Children in the midſt of* Iſrael, *Deut.* 17. 19, 20. In his own Country and Dominion, that ended he may be received up into Gods Kingdom above; for this promiſe is come in under the Goſpel. Neither is the other taken away, but rather obſcured; that is, not ſo much mentioned under the Manifeſtation of the Greater; the like promiſe remains ſtill annexed to the firſt Commandment, *Epheſ.* 6. 2, 3. And here is the alike reaſon: The obſervation of the conditions of the promiſe do according to Gods eſtabliſhment of things tend towards the obtaining of it, and ſo on the contrary it is of the threatnings, which come on by ſin and ignorance. But further Gods ſpecial providence is over his own People, and more particularly over his Anointed. *It is he that giveth Salvation unto Kings*, Pſal. 144. 10. Not that all good Kings have always temporal deliverances, for there is the example of *Joſiah*, who had that excellent Character, 2 *Kings* 23. 25. The reaſon of whoſe untimely Death ſeems to be given in the verſe following; If God doth ſometimes let the Righteous fall (his wayes are juſtice and goodneſs it is not for ever, for it will be *abundantly made up in the day of recompence*; *But* Jehoſaphat *ſought to the Lord God of his Father and walked in his Commandments*, and not after the doings of *Iſrael*; therefore the Lord eſtabliſhed the Kingdom in his hand, *and all* Judah *brought to* Jehoſaphat *preſents, and he had riches and honour in abundance*, 2 Chron. 17. 4, 5. Something may be hence gathered, for God is the ſame ſtill, *No accepter of Perſons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteouſneſs is accepted with him*, Acts 10. 34, 35. Let the King be aſſured that if he cleaves

unto God with his whole heart, and puts away Idolatry and falſe Worſhip, he ſhall have Temporal or Eternal Salvation; that moſt commonly, this moſt certainly, but rather both. It is ſo well pleaſing unto God when thoſe obey him whom he hath placed in the higheſt Room on Earth, that he rewards them here and hereafter. To rule according to Gods Commandments is the moſt ſafe way to preſerve them in the Royal Seat of their Anceſtors. *In mercy ſhall the Throne be eſtabliſhed, and he ſhall ſit upon it in Truth, in the Tabernacle of* David, *judging and ſeeking judgment and haſting Righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 16. 5. *Did not thy Father Eat and Drink, and d Judgment and Juſtice, and then it was well with him, he judged the cauſe of the Poor and Needy, then it was well with him, was not this to know me ſaith the Lord?* Jer. 22. 16. Every one that hath but the common ſence of humanity muſt love, honour and obey him; and theſe will be ſuch a ſafe-guard to his perſon, that thoſe his implacable Enemies, whom no goodneſs can overcome will be forced to lick the duſt; *for a Good man ſome would even dare to die*, Rom. 5. 7. But for preſervation of a good King, thouſands will venture their lives, and undergo the greateſt extremity. He is happy in the good-will and affection of his Subjects, they will rejoyce and praiſe God on his behalf, to ſee him alſo zealous for his glory; that he would ſuffer all Godly and Faithful Miniſters, that a ſtop may be put to that torrent of iniquity, which is a vexation to behold. *In his dayes ſhall the Righteous flouriſh, and abundance of peace ſo long as the Moon endureth. Prayer alſo ſhall be made continually for him, and daily ſhall he be praiſed*, Pſal. 72. 4, 7, 15. The Common-wealth will be then happy, when Kings are Chriſtians, not in name or title, but when they live and govern according to the Rules of the Goſpel. When they are Obedient to God, diligent in his Worſhip and Ordinances, exerciſe all manner of Righteouſneſs and Juſtice towards their people, and themſelves obſerve Temperance and Sobriety; and ſo manage all their Actions as Men that indeed look for a Judgment to come. There is an excellent Scheme laid down better then that of Antient or Modern Polititians (which ſtands in no need of them, for it hath Providence and Wiſdom from above) and will make a Prince renowned for all Ages. It will give him ſatisfaction of mind, that is, in beginning; for the utmoſt happineſs here is *Light Sowen*, Pſal. 97. 11. A laying in of Joy and Peace as Seed to the future Harveſt of Extaſy and Glory. *His glory is great in*

thy

thy Salvation, Honour and Majeſty haſt thou laid upon him, Pſal 21. 5.

I hope none of the Grandees of the Earth think otherwiſe, that Religion doth not thus much, but ſeems to them an undervaluing of Majeſty, as rather calculated for low ſneaking, and not for noble Spirits. Leaſt any who term themſelves brave Souls ſhould ſay ſo in their heart, for they will not with the tongue for fear of betraying their own infidelity and ignorance, let this ſhort queſtion be put to them, the firſt words of the Creed, Whether they do believe in God? And thoſe deſcriptions given of him, confirmed by his viſible works, *Deut.* 10. 17. 1 *Kings* 8. 27. *Pſal.* 18. *verſ.* 7. to *verſ.* 16. *Pſal.* 113. 4. *Job* 11. 7, 8, 9. & 37. 22. *Iſa.* 40. throughout, *Jer.* 10. 6, 10. *Dan.* 4. 35. & 7. 10. *Rom.* 11. 36. 1 Tim. 6, 15, 16. and many other like places. It may not be ſurmiſed, that the Spirit bearing Witneſs of it ſelf ſhould over magnify, for there ſeems to be an higher ſtrain then all theſe, *Wiſd.* 11. 22. *Eccluſ* 43. 27. 30. Who conſiders but the leaſt of ſuch an infinite Glorious Being, can no more think it a diſhonour for the greateſt Emperor to proſtrate himſelf with his face to the ground in Duſt and Aſhes before this High and Lofty one that inhabiteth Eternity, then it would be for the moſt abject fellow to kneel before him. This compariſon is ſufficient proof, but comes not near; for the diſtance between Almighty God and the greateſt perſonage on Earth exceeds that between him and the moſt contemptible fly; Now if the vileſt inſect ſhould open its Mouth and ſay it was as Man, ſhould we therefore think ſo? Or if the meaneſt beggar ſhould ſpeak out, that it was a diſgrace for him to be uncovered before My Lord the King, we could not but be moved with indignation at his Pride and Folly. Yet I wiſh it be not thus among too many, who are neither Kings nor Lords, but take as much upon them; who being purſe-proud have not only lifted up their hearts above their Brethren, it is for the poorer ſort to be Religious, forſooth they think themſelves too good to be in ſubjection unto the Lord their Maker. If Kings and Princes are not, much leſs are they; for if the matter be conſidered aright it muſt be acknowledged; Whatever the World eſteems greatneſs, there is none greater then he that feareth the Lord: It is meet and right ſo to do, even for *Angels* and *Arch-Angels* and all the Hoſt of Heaven, much more is it for thoſe that dwell in Houſes of Clay; for Deut. 8. 13, 14.

they also are in this little mouldring Tenement, who inhabit Palaces and larger Buildings, and therefore let them not absurdly conceive that an under-valuing, which is their Highest Honour to be Servants of the Lord. An illustrious Example of this we have in *David*, 2 Sam. 6. *When the Ark was brought up, himself played before the Lord, and Danced with the rest of the People. And* Michal, Sauls *Daughter, looked through a Window, and saw King* David *Leaping and Dancing before the Lord, and she despised him, and came out to meet him, and said, How glorious was the King of* Israel *to day, who uncovered himself to day in the Eyes of the Handmaid of his Servants, as one of the vain Fellows shamelesly uncovereth himself.* * David here was so far from being discouraged that he is more confirmed in his Duty; *I will be yet more vile then thus, and will be base in mine own sight.* His resolution was to do as he ought, before he examine other consequences, *I will play before the Lord.* His praise was not of Men, but of God, he had rather be approved of by him, and despised of them, then to be had in honour by them, and despised by him. Such must be the mind of those of the more exalted condition, who will enter into his service and expect his favour. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven Images*, Isa. 42. 8. Nor yet to living Men, he will not allow of, that the things which please him shall be dispensed with all for pleasing others. Whosoever will not come unto him, or afterwards leave undone several Acts of Duty for fear of diminishing his Honour and Reputation in the World, he may stay away, for he lightly esteems of the Rock of his Salvation. He is unworthy of the Favour and Blessing of God who will part with them for a puff of breath from talking Worms of the Earth, which neither is so High, Universal, or Loud as the Wind which passeth away.

* To be Noted by the way of the silly proud Women of this and former Ages, who have mean thoughts of their Husbands if they serve God, as if not so Gentile and Men of Honour as others, they will use to them or others privately the like contemptuous Language.

Here will arise another short Gale of Exhortation, *As for Man, his days are as Grass: as a Flower of the Field, so he flourisheth, for the Wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more*, Psal. 103. 15, 16. An exact resemblance of our Condition in this World, but of a different Reflection to two several sorts of Men. It is matter of Vexation to them, who

have

have their Portion in this Life, and have none assurance of that which is to come. It is so irksome, that they cannot consider their *Pride of Glory*, Isa. 23. 9. passeth away, and they make daily approaches to receive a recompence for their evil Deeds. One that is continually going to the place of Execution can take but little Pleasure, though he hath some Miles to it, and is to pass by Meadows, Gardens, Woods, and the most delightful Countrey that ever the Eye saw; and though he is feasted with all imaginable Rarities upon the Road, hath Variety of Wine and Women, and Musick, unless he doth quite stupifie and make himself unmindful of his Journeys end. If he doth so, yet his Misery is never the less, or unavoidable, but increased by the sad and dismal Change; much worse is their Condition *who spend their days in Mirth, and in a moment go down to the Grave*. What a motive is here to turn quickly aside out of this, and get into the other way? To use all means for getting an Hope true and firm, sure and stedfast, then is Comfort and Rejoycing, the nearer one comes to the end thereof. The longer one walks in the path that leads to Heaven, he is better satisfied, for it is more smooth and plain, and there are fewer steps till arrived at the Blessed Countrey. *This is my Rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it*, Psal. 132. 14. He is glad at every Stage, for he is advanced yet further in the way. He can sup Cheerfully and refresh himself with the good things of the Inn, but he must rise up early and away. He will use them so far, as to renew his Strength for Travel, but if he should gorge himself, then he would not be fit to go. He is journeying to receive for himself a Kingdom, but it is not one of this Earth, nor bringing it down here, no more then he can keep that which he hath already, but is obliged against this shall fail, to secure unto himself, that which endureth unto all Ages, *That Kingdom which cannot be moved*, Heb. 11. 28. He must use Diligence and Earnestness, for *From the days of John the Baptist, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take by force*, Mat. 11. 11, 12. So that a few and careless Endeavours will not serve the turn, there must be exercised the whole Strength of a Man. *Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven*, Mat. 7. 21. Here again is to observed, that the performance of outward Acts of Devotion will not bring him thither.

thither, unleſs he doth alſo the Will of God; which is expreſly revealed and applied to him, *to keep all the Words of this Law, and theſe Statutes to do them*, Deut. 17. 19. Oh but it may be ſaid, that is impoſſible: Let him inſtance in one Commandment that is ſo, and if each of them is poſſible to be kept, then the whole is likewiſe by united Care and Diligence. But it is very hard, Nothing is ſo to the Grace of God; and if it be to Fleſh and Blood, the Command is, *Strive to enter into the Streight Gate*, Luke 13.24. The word in the Greek Language imports, as much as putting forth the utmoſt ſtrength, which certainly may be done. None obtains the corruptible Crown without they run for it, ſo neither the incorruptible Crown without Pains. We do not Pity thoſe which endure great Hardſhips as long as thereby they Atchieve mighty Conqueſts, and ſubdue whole Countries; this is thought to make amends for all the trouble they have been at; and why ſhould we think ſo hardly of Heaven if we muſt Labour before we come there? Is not that as much worth as ſome ſmall ſpot of Ground here? We ſee that is had, ſo in the way thither is ſomewhat had, which is not ſeen, but really perceived, *viz. Peace and Contentment of Soul.* Thoſe who have fought many pitch Battels, undergone tedious Marches, Who ſeemed to be of a Gentile Nature, have waded through a Sea of Blood; Who have been bred up to Softneſs and Delicacy, have endured the heat by Day and froſt by Night to obtain that end. All the Labour and ſtriving in the World to better their preſent Condition, is, if that would give more quiet of mind. They grudge at no Pain for the fancied means towards it, which were wrong and falſe, as might have been known before, becauſe thoſe who ſit at the very top of Worldly proſperous Condition do moſt want it. You are once more ſhewed the alone true Happineſs, do ye pauſe? And are ye diſcouraged at it? This doth not become men of great and excellent; Spirits, I am ſure a little Hardſhip is no hindrance in in all other Actions of Life, Why ſhould it be in this great and real Concern? for a falſe and little ſhew whereof they are undertaken The difficulty ſhould not ſo much frighten, as the neceſſity preſs forward; for who miſſes hereof is undone for ever.

Eternal Salvation is a thing which cannot be made too ſure of. In great Enterprizes Men look every way, and uſe all manner of Circumſpection that they may ſucceed. What are they for? Is not Happineſs more then all that can be named? Can thought and

and care be needleſs as to this, when ſo much is had about the leſs material things? *And if a man ſtrive for Maſteries, yet is he not Crowned except he ſtrive lawfully*, 2 Tim. 2. 5. All Religion is to the intent that we may pleaſe God. He who is made by him chief Officer in the Armies of the Earth, muſt ſubmit (upon Pain of his diſpeaſure) unto the Orders of the Great Governor of the World. And what are they? *He ſhall read in the Book of the Law all the days of his Life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of his Law, and theſe Statutes to do them* Deut. 17. 11. Which it is impoſſible he ſhould, unleſs he know them. And if he follows after Chriſt, he will not walk in darkneſs. *He is the way, the Truth and the Life.* Which the King himſelf is to come unto, and walk in, if he would *Live for ever.* John 14. 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the NOBILITY and GENTRY.

An Exhortation for them to ſerve God: a Caution againſt Miſtakes in matters of Religion: the Unreaſonableneſs of ſome particular Reproaches: Of Humility, and the Way to Greatneſs: The Deſcription of a Good Man.

I *Will get me unto the great Men, and will ſpeak unto them*, Jer. 5. 5. Even here ſomewhat may be Collected out of the written word of God, for their uſe and benefit. Amongſt his choſen People the *Iſraelites*, there is frequent mention made of Princes, Nobles, Great Men, and Rulers. It is neceſſary for the ſupport and exerciſe of Government, that there ſhould be ſubordinate Miniſters. The King having large Territories and Dominion, cannot Rule them all immediately by himſelf, but muſt conſtitute Judges and Officers throughout his Countrey, which is according to *Deut.* 16. 18. and hath been the continued uſage of all Nations. As theſe diſcharge their Truſt committed by their Sovereign, he doth commonly annex Honour and Profits. Thus they and their Poſterity become Noble according to the Titles he hath given them. *David* a King equal in Power and Majeſty to the reſt of the Earth, freely and according to truth acknowledges, 1 *Chron.* 29. 11, 12. what ſome Monarchs will not ſpeak out. God giveth Honour unto the King, who conveyeth it down, ſo all is to be derived from him. This way of advancement in it ſelf is good and lawful, for the King *is to give Praiſe to them that do well*, 1 Pet. 2. 14. but eſpecially to thoſe who with Wiſdom, uprightneſs and diligence manage that Authority intruſted with them. Neither was it only allowable in the time of Carnal Ordinances, but remains now under the more ſpiritual Diſpenſation.

Numb. 27. 20.

on. The *Eunuch* of great Authority under *Candace* Queen of the *Ethiopians* was converted to the Faith; and after inſtruction therein, *Philip* told him, *If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt be baptized*, Acts 8. 37. but did not at all require him to part with his high place. The time would fail me to ſpeak of *Nicodemus*, the *Centurion*, Rich *Zacheus*, thoſe honourable Women, *Sergius Paulus* the Deputy, the Saints in *Ceſars* Houſhold, which believed on the Lord Jeſus, and of all thoſe Perſons of higher Rank, who embraced Chriſtianity after the Apoſtles times. It did not only ſpread into Villages and common Cities, but that of the imperial Reſidence; and was received by the chief Officers of his Army, and thoſe next in Dignity under the Emperour. The Grain of Muſtard Seed was the leaſt of all when firſt ſown, but did ſhoot it ſelf more and more by Degrees. And though at the firſt Preaching of the Goſpel, *Not many mighty, not many noble are called*, yet we ſee according to Gods gracious method more were afterwards; and according to his good promiſes we are to expect yet a further addition and increale, **When the people are gathered together, and the Kingdoms to ſerve the Lord**, Pſal. 102. 22. Of every Rank and Degree, of every Calling and Occupation, of every Generation ſince the World began, of every Countrey, Nation and Language, and from every Corner of the Earth, there will come from the Eaſt and Weſt and ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of God. None is excluded from thence only upon the Account of what, when, and where he was in the World.

1 Cor. 1. 26.

Some indeed do ſtand in more ſlippery places then others, they are in greater Danger to fall, but yet they may ſtand if they take heed. *The Rich are in a Temptation, and a Snare* (enticing and deceiving them) *into fooliſh and hurtful Luſts, which drown Men in Deſtruction and Perdition*; but this Temptation may be overcome, the Snare ſeen and avoided, as the Apoſtle ſheweth them how, 1 *Tim.* 6. But yet they are a ſtrong Allurement to Vanity and Senſuality, they can Adminiſter a preſent Gratification to the Fleſh, and this makes a goodly appearance of Happineſs. Which hath been repreſented in its utmoſt advantage, and found falſe and empty. God doth equally intend the Happineſs of all mankind, and therefore that cannot be the proper one which is not given to all: For they are all of the ſame Frame and natural Deſires, Body and Soul alike, which would appear if they had the

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ſame Education and Circumſtances. That thoſe of upper Condition be not exalted above meaſure, let them know, There is not ſo much in Riches and Honour, as is commonly imagined. Gold, Pearls and coſtly Array are nothing of the Man himſelf; they neither came into the World with him, nor ſhall go out with him; and our ſelves would think it ridiculous, if we ſaw an Horſe inſult and puſh his Fellow as if not worthy to come near, becauſe the other hath a rich Saddle and fine Entrappings. Bare Honour is but Breath depending upon the Speaker, and when received in may bloat up or burſt the Owner; but can never fill, or make him more Healthy. And though theſe Men are puffed up upon Account of other Priviledges, it might be manifeſted particularly what they are ſenſible of by Experience, that the trouble and diſcontent ariſing from them, will abundantly Counterpoiſe the ſeeming Good and Complacency. Beſides, that they are in no wiſe adequate to the Divine Soul of Man; for Senſual and Viſible things can never ſatisfie her which is of a different Nature, they are narrow and finite unable to fill her large Room and boundleſs Deſires. They may be juſt taken in, but do not throughly repleniſh the leaſt part thereof. And further they come from without, which may be ſtopped by ſeveral Accidents and hindred from within. If the Body is ſick, or there be Pain in the leaſt Member, all thoſe put together will not make Compenſation; nor can it be driven away, when the Patient will by all his Riches and Greatneſs. They cannot cure Grief and Vexation of mind for common occaſions, much leſs *the fears and thoughts of the World to come*; for theſe are only to be allayed as hereafter ſhewed: But other kinds of Remedy are more dangerous, and in the end will prove longer tormenting, then preſent irkſomeneſs and diſquiet. Indeed unleſs thoſe are ordered aright, it will ſpoyl the Enjoyment of all; for do what he can, this thought will ever and anon recur, That he who is Lord of ſo many Acres, muſt be confined to ſuch a Compaſs of ground which is ſix Foot in length, and two in breadth, for *Nobles ſhall dwell in the Duſt*, Nahum 3. 18. It will not ſtay there, but go further; for who hath not heard of *the Rich Man that died, and was buried*, (there is ſomewhat worſe ſucceeds.) *And in Hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments*, Luke 16. 22, 23. If this which was ſpoken by Truth it ſelf, were duly conſidered of, it would make Great Men tremble, and live otherwiſe then they do; for

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we can ſee no Example of their manner of Life throughout the Goſpel, but in him, who went to Hell, and there is no other Reaſon aſſigned thereof but his voluptuous Living, and what may be gathered of uncharitableneſs. Too many now adays reſemble him in both, giving not much more out of their great Poſſeſſions then a few Crumbs, which fall down of Courſe and according to Cuſtom. They had beſt take heed, that their end be not the ſame alſo. Who will go on in his way, and not think thereof now, yet then *He will lift up his eyes*, and conſider from whence he is fallen. It will be moſt afflicting to remember, that who had all things to pleaſe Fleſh and Blood, ſhould be tormented there; who ſwilled down delicious Wine in abundance, ſhould want a drop of Water to cool his Tongue.

Be not frightned with this Severity of Words, for it is better to be fore-warned, though in the moſt terrible Characters, then ſuffer the Truth and Signification of them. If diligent care be not uſed to prevent this, it will take off from the Pleaſure of your Recreations and Paſtimes as they are called. Which are ſaid to be made uſe of to ſpend the time, as if that did not paſs away faſt enough of it ſelf: And it may ſeem ſtrange, that ſome ſhould ſo much endeavour to throw that away, when for ought they know (unleſs they repent and bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance) this is the only time of Comfort they will ever have, and therefore they ſhould make much of it, that it may appear long, but not contrariwiſe. Which is an intimation, that their Life, which they would have others think ſo Happy, yet themſelves do not find it; for *they that count it Pleaſure to riot in the day time*, 2 Pet. 2. 13. yet are more Solicitous to make it ſeem ſhort, then poor Day-labourers. At night they fall to the Works of Darkneſs, ſpend the greater part in Chambering and Wantonneſs. When it is time to awake out of ſleep, then they go to it, and reverſe Gods Ordinance of the night for Reſt. By not obſerving the words of his Law, the threatning is fulfilled now upon Earth, *In the Morning thou ſhalt ſay, World God it were even; and at even thou ſhalt ſay, Would God it were Morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou ſhalt fear*, Deut. 28 67. As is diſcovered by them, who cannot be one minute without Company, who in time of Health muſt have wax Candles burning all Night. In the day they make it their Buſineſs to ſtifle it more: And yet for all they would have time paſs away. Which is a manifeſt token of the

Misery of their present Condition, for none can desire that, unless it be out of Expectation of a future and greater Blessedness; which they have no Prospect of, being only for the present, and what is before them. If all this should at length end in a sad Eternity, there is no Stupefaction, nor making the least part thereof to pass away; and it will be ten thousand times more Vexing, then that now in the days of their Flesh. What can be said too much to recover People out of this Condition? What kind of Expressions shall be made use of to prevent others sliding in, but the least towards it? To you High and Rich, let this warning be given. Who are so desirous after it, have a care of mis-placing or seeking in a wrong way that Happiness which is to be found in God only, and in the way he hath shewed; for there it is to be had, and no where else, *For my People have Committed two Evils: They have forsaken me the Fountain of living Waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no Water*, Jer. 2. 13. Who resort to these, will be still disappointed of satisfying their Thirst. Our gracious God in that he would the more effectually draw us unto himself, hath so provided that we cannot be otherwise Happy, but by coming unto him, and we must be necessarily miserable if we do not.

Man is a proud Worm, he will not stand beholden, no not to God for Happiness, though he hath brought him into Being, and furnished him with those means, by which he will try to attain it himself, and his own way in opposition to that prescribed unto him. 'Tis Riches and Honour, which lift him up to this height, he thinks them his own, and they can make him Happy, and what need he then be indebted to any? For he is apt to say in his heart, Deut. 18. 17, 18. *My power and the might of my hand hath got me this Wealth*, or else mine Ancestors have done it for me; whereas he should *remember the Lord his God, for it is he that giveth thee Power to get Wealth*: It is he which brought thee into this World by means of such Parents; if it had been the good Pleasure of his Will, he might have caused thee, even thee, to have been a Beggars Off-spring, whom now he hath made the Son of Nobles. Thou shouldst rather be the more thankful and obedient for his Goodness, and not thence take occasion to be stubborn, or lift up thy self against him. *O Generation, see ye the word of the Lord: Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? A Land of darkness? Wherefore say my People, We are Lords, we will no more come unto thee?* Jer. 2. 31. He doth as it were expostulate whether such should be the return for his Love and Kindness? Stop a little, and think seriously. It pleaseth God

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now to call you by his Grace; Be ſure not to confer with Fleſh and Blood, but examine the things which have, and are to be delivered in the Spirit of your Minds: Have nothing to do with carnal Reaſon, hearken not to the inſinuations of luſt, or bewitchings of concupiſcence: Put away all things which may hinder, *As new born Babes, deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. It will do you no harm.

Let us walk honeſtly as in the day, not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, not in Chambering and Wantonneſs, not in Strife and Envying. But put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not proviſion for the Fleſh to fulfill the Luſts thereof, Rom. 13. 13, 14. What pleaſure doth at this inſtant remain of all paſt Jollities? and if none doth now in time of health and enjoyment, much leſs will they comfort upon a Death-bed. They are fading and unſatisfying Vanities, delight only a very little for the preſent, but not yield a true contentment. Wherefore leave them before they leave you, if you forſake them, you will avoid all their dreadful conſequents; but if you hold faſt to them, they will at length forſake you as to their refreſhing Nature, for this laſts not in Sickneſs or declining Age, but the guilt they leave behind, will ſtick cloſe and preſs you down to the lowermoſt Hell. You muſt of neceſſity part; you ſee what difference there is, if they or you firſt drop away, or you come out from among them; In the Name of God caſt them of forthwith, do not cry out with the Sluggard, *yet a little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little folding of the hands to Sleep*; let me lye a little longer in my ſins, and then I will riſe: Thou doſt not ſurely conſider, who it is that calls thee. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and Chriſt will give thee life.* Your hands have been defiled with ſin and filthineſs, *Waſh ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine Eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well. Come now let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord, though your ſins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be white as Snow, though they be red like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool.* Behold what manner of Love and Condeſcention is here; The Mighty God propoſes to reaſon with thoſe whom he could as eaſily cut in pieces as make this offer; what cauſe can be aſſigned for ſuch unparalled goodneſs, but his own gracious nature which delighteth in Mercy? He doth make the firſt propoſals of Reconciliation between himſelf and his ſtout Creature. What a wonderful thing is this, that the humility of God, who is ſo *Glorious in Majeſty, fearful in Praiſes,* Iſa. 1. 16, 17, 18.

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and doing wonders, ſhould exceed that of Man, the Work of his hands, a ſmall contemptible and impotent being. And yet how ſtrange would it be (let the Heavens and Earth be aſtoniſhed) if he who is leſs then nothing, ſhould withſtand and deſpiſe ſuch goodneſs? Call to mind further, he doth not this becauſe he cannot do otherwiſe, for he hath ſeverity in ſtore as he will manifeſt upon thy ſelf if thou contemneſt his goodneſs; it cannot be, unleſs thou art guilty of the moſt horrible incivility that ever was, thou ſhouldſt refuſe to hearken when he calls thee; Thou mayeſt put off thy inferiours to a more convenient ſeaſon, and whom thou doſt not much care for; but God is the excellent one in all the World, who daily poureth his benefits on thee, hath given all thou haſt, who holdeth thy Soul in life? Is he not worthy to have a preſent anſwer? *To be opened unto immediately*, Luke 12. 36. Who is Lord of Heaven and Earth, to whom the greateſt Monarch is a Graſhopper.

If you do not hearken to this, but ſlight and deſpiſe; he hath his threatnings, which thoſe ſhall feel who do not mind them, as *Pſal.* 29. *Job* 34. 20, 24. *Rev.* 6. 15, 18, 17. *Amos* 2. 14. *Iſa.* 10. 3. *Rom.* 2. 9, 11, 12. *Mat.* 13. 42. You are Men and not God, you are Fleſh and not Spirit, and your Fleſh is not the Fleſh of Braſs, nor your Bones Iron. They muſt neceſſarily turn into the Duſt of the Earth; And you that cannot now bear the leaſt indignity offered to your perſon, how will you endure to *riſe upto everlaſting ſhame and contempt*, Dan. 12. 2. Or to drop into Miſery in all things juſt contrary to that ſoftneſs and delicacies here. An heedleſs unbelieving thought will not ſecure Men as to this, for what is prepared cannot be deſtroyed by an imagination only. As *Abraham* ſaid to *Dives*, *the great gulph is fixed*, beſides the inference he there makes, *Luke* 16. 26. This alſo follows, ſo that thoſe who are not yet in, but going the direct way to it, can neither paſs it by, nor after being plunged in, get out again by an Opinion or Wiſh; There are many pretty ſayings about this, but in the mean while whom ſhall we believe? The Wiſdom and Truth of God, or the Fooliſhneſs and Falſhood of Men; Certainly the ſafer way is for every one to uſe diligent care and circumſpection, that he come not there which he is now reminded of; Gods Word is as true as his Exiſtence and ſeeing he hath ſaid by his Son, *the Worm ſhall not die, and the fire ſhall not be quenched*, to deny it would be to make God a Liar, or the Lord Jeſus an Impo-

Impoſtor, which none either can as to defeat what he hath ſaid, or dare to do. Let me ask the great Men, Do ye believe theſe things? I know ye are Chriſtians, and ye do believe them; Why then will you not be moved to flee from the wrath to come? If you are impeached of High Treaſon againſt your Sovereign, you will uſe all endeavours not to be found guilty; and if you are, you will uſe no means unattempted to procure a Pardon. We are all by Nature the Children of Wrath, and conſequently liable unto it, and have added further Rebellions againſt the *Majeſty on High*. Is he not as dreadful who liveth for ever to take vengeance, as Princes are whoſe breath goeth forth and their thoughts periſh? Do ye think, ye ought not as much ſtand in aw of the *Great Mighty and Terrible God* (for ſo he is ſtill to them that obey not the Goſpel) as of meer Man? Is he not as worthy to be ſought after? Ye have offended againſt him, and will ye ſtand out ſtill? Is it meet he ſhould come unto you, and force a Pardon upon you, whether you will or not? Indeed *he waits to be gracious*, but it is to thoſe who come unto him, and if you will not (to ſpeak in the gentile dialect) you may chooſe and be damned. Our ſelves would take it ill, if we ſhould at great coſt or pains get a Pardon for a Servant, and he out of peeviſh pride or negligence would refuſe it; Now this Chriſt hath done, he hath purchaſed you with his own Blood, but you muſt ſue it out your ſelves, or go without it. A condemned Criminal here is dealt bountifully withal, if his life be ſpared only; but the goodneſs of God endureth yet daily, and infinitely exceeds that of Creatures. He doth pardon, and if ye continue in his goodneſs (otherwiſe ye ſhall be cut off) rewardeth you; *This ſhall be the Covenant which I will make with the Houſe of* Iſrael, *after thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my People* (this is the firſt part of it, as well as the other) *for I will forgive their iniquity, and their ſin will remember no more*, Jer. 31. 33, 34. This extends both to the leaſt and greateſt, for they are expreſſed; He promiſes to *be our God*, which imports as much (as is evident from the whole tenour of the Goſpel) what is ſaid 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. *We ſhall be ever with the Lord*: Which ſhould be deſirable to thoſe who think it a priviledge to ſtand in the preſence of the King, much more is it before the great King of all the Earth. *In thy preſence is fullneſs of joy, at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore*, Pſal. 16. 11.

16. 11. You that affect nothing but great Company, do likewise seek to be *Equal unto the Angels*, Luke 20. 36. The least of whom doth exceed the greatest of Men. Who are now in the first rank, Why will you not in a Godly sort be ambitious of being so in the first born of Heaven, and endeavour after a degree of Glory answerable to that of greatness ye have here? In the Name of God try to keep your first Station, that you may never have the least cause to remember from whence you are fallen; Never sink below your selves, strive to attain the higher perfections, but above all take heed of coming short of the lowest; for it is better to be least in the Kingdom of God, then not to be there at all. *Little Flock, it is my Fathers Will to give you a Kingdom*, Luke. 12. 32. And why should it not be yours to accept of it? Who deem your selves worthy of all honour, I hope will not judge your selves unworthy of everlasting life; for all your abundance, you would receive a great Estate, if any of your Friends and Relations would bequeath it unto you; And will you not accept of *an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you*? 1 Pet. 1. 4. if you perform the conditions required. As for that you have already, must fade away, for if you think the Lands are yours for ever, yet your selves are not so; they may remain somewhat longer, but you shall be taken away before. *Their inward thought is, that their Houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all Generations; they call their lands after their own Names; this their way is their folly, yet their posterity approveth their sayings*, Psal. 49. 11, 13. When many times they do not long enjoy their lands, for these change owners and seldom continue in the same Family for two or three hundred years, much less for ever. Nay, if they were secured from Folly, Prodigality, Forfeiture, Injustice (as that is in defeating the next Heir of the Blood of the *inheritance of his Fathers*) and of firm Title and furthest from Inundation of the Sea, yet this would not endure for ever; for the time draweth near when *the Earth shall be burnt up, and all the Works thereof*, so the goodliest Estate now seen is but temporal which fades away. He that hath the best tenure and most indefeasible right, yet hath no perpetuity, but himself is tenant at will to the great Landlord of Heaven and Earth; now tis the wisest way of such an one to feather his nest, to provide well against the time he shall be turned out. Agreeable hereunto is the Counsel of the Lord Jesus, *And I say*

1 Kings 21. 3.

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unto you, make to your ſelves Friends of the mammon of Unrighteouſneſs, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations, Luke 16. 9. It is ſtrange, that thoſe who have ſuch an advantage of Worldly outward proſperity, of which they muſt be one day eternally deprived, ſhould not take care againſt that fails to be provided of an Happineſs in the higheſt Heavens for evermore; eſpecially if they miſs thereof, they muſt fall down into oppoſite Miſery. One of theſe two muſt be your condition, there is no avoiding of it; if you ſhould be miſerable, it will be in a worſe degree then the common ſort of mankind, becauſe of *your manifold tranſgreſſions and mighty ſins*, Amos 5. 12. They are againſt great Love and Mercy, and when thoſe which ſhould have been Examples unto others of obedience and righteous living, have moſt of all ſinned and contemned the Almighty, Vengeance may be taken upon them ſeven-fold; and when the day of their calamity is come, that pride and pleaſure in which now they ſo much truſt, ſhall be all vaniſhed and gone, and ſerve to torment them yet more by ſad reflections of what they have been. For as the benefit is great, if they uſe Riches and Honour as inſtruments to ſet forth the Glory of God, and maintain good Works; ſo likewiſe is the danger great if thence they be proud and rebellious, turning them into an occaſion to fulfill the luſts of the fleſh: it would have been better not to have had, then thus to have abuſed them. It is not only becauſe ſuch an one is in a higher Seat in the World, therefore he ſhall be ſo in that to come; for there will be changes, and thoſe that are exalted, ſhall be abaſed: Yet to him that rightly managed the ten Talents, authority was given over ten Cities; and he that did five, had proportionably. So contrariwiſe, he that is unfaithful in moſt ſhall receive the greater condemnation; and if he that received but one Talent went and digged in the Earth and hid his Lords Money, was caſt into outer Darkneſs as an unprofitable Servant; What will become of him, who received ten or five, and uſed them to rebel againſt his Lord? *Of how much ſorer puniſhment ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought worthy?* Luke 19. 17, 18.

Now things are ſo ſet, that extremity and eternity of joy or ſorrow muſt be the final condition of every one; it may ſeem impertinent to bid him chooſe whether he will have, as if ten thouſand Talents were laid on an heap, and the other ſide a ſingle farthing, to make long perſwaſion that he would be ſure to

make choice of the first; Or if there was offered unto him a glass of the most pleasant Wine, and a cup of deadly Poyson, and he knew before which was so. Neither of these come up to the present Case, for the good of the one is more beyond the evil of the other, then in any two things that can be compared. Although there is such a vast difference, yet commonly the evil part is chosen; and those who call themselves Men, yea, Men of Honour and Renown, are worse then Children in understanding. They greedily catch at toyes and trifles, they are careful to learn all the punctilios of Honour, niceties of Pride, modes of Breeding, and things which belong to their Quality; but in the mean while are negligent *of the things that belong to their peace.* They run after every imaginary pleasure, are for every thing which hath the name of it, yet they will not seek after true and real Happiness; they run on still in their course, not considering for what end they came into the World, or what will become of them when gone out. This is not a Gentlemans business, he is to go in the Fashion, carry himself obligingly in Company, understand his Estate; this is sufficient for him, What should he mind any thing else for? Let him do what his inclinations lead him unto, such is the language of Pride and Modishness; But what saith the Holy Spirit thereto? *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish People and unwise? is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee and established thee? Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee,* Deut. 32.6. 18. Wilt thou obliterate the notions of him who hath spread thy Table, and made thy Cup to overflow? Is this the return, he is to make to his Almighty Benefactor? He may turn Mercies into Disobedience, yet he shall not go unpunished; forsooth it is not his business to work the work God hath sent him to do, he is too good for it in his own conceit; *The Lord saith, them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed,* 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. Some may not care if they are so, for as yet they find no harm come by it; but what will become of the most scornful and exalted Sinner, when God shall pluck thee out of the land of the living, and there shall be none to deliver thee? Even here, though thine house of defence be very high, he can bring thee down, make thee a mock and by-word as he hath done by some; but he doth generally suffer Mens evil Deeds in this World, letting them go on as they will, as he did the

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manners of the Iſraelites *fourty years in the Wilderneſs*, Acts 13. 18 Yet they ſhall be ſure to receive the juſt recompence of them in that which is to come. There is no *holding the Spirit in*, it will fly out there, do what thou canſt; and leaſt it ſhould be then nothing but ſhivering and horrour, *Repent therefore of thy Wickedneſs, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*, Acts 8. 22. *Caſt down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God.* When this is done, thou wilt think it as much thy duty and buſineſs to obey God, as it is of the pooreſt Man. 2 Cor. 10. 5.

To the Poor the Goſpel is Preached, Luke 7. 22. Thoſe who are rich and high in their own conceits, will not receive it ſo far as to obtain the benefits thereof; Chriſt is *a Prince and a Saviour*, they are both joyned together; and his government reaches to the inward Man, to allay thoſe ſwelling thoughts and order them aright. *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 5. 3. They are meet partakers thereof, for 'tis not riches but *truſting in them* that hinder from thence. Neither need they fear from *Luke* 16. 19. For poor *Lazarus* was in rich *Abrahams* Boſome; ſo there are of both ſorts: If they that buy be as though they poſſeſſed not, and they that uſe this world as not abuſing it, although they have never ſo much thereof, yet through the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt they ſhall be ſaved as well as others. They may ſtill conceive themſelves to be ſo as who have not ſuch abundance, and with what remains over (deducting for the neceſſity and conveniency of their Families, out of which alſo a portion is to be laid aſide for the Poor) give Alms and maintain gook Works. This ſeems to be the deſign of the Goſpel as appears by the ſeveral precepts and the practiſe of primitive Chriſtians (not only of thoſe *Acts* 2. 45. for that community was not then of neceſſary obligation, *Acts* 5. 4.) but thoſe further on for ſome centuries; who if they were rich, did mightily abound in Liberality and Alms-giving for relief of Chriſts poor Brethren. I am moved with indignation as often as I think of that Emperor, who in a pious diſpoſition reſigned the Throne, or hear of any other who by a ſingle and imprudent refuſal at once deprives himſelf of Ability for exerciſing a thouſand Acts of Charity and opportunity of well doing, and conſequently of a greater reward; Whereas the higher ſtation Men are in, they may do God more ſervice, and their goodneſs be

exemplary: If we ſearch to the bottom, this miſtaken way doth rather proceed from pride then ſelf-denial, for the reaſon thereof ſeems to be, that they could not ſo well come down to thoſe *baſe things of the World, and the things which are deſpiſed*, 1 Cor. 1. 28. Which they rightly think themſelves in Conſcience bound to do, but they can better do it once for all, then ſeveral repeated times; whereas Humility is more acceptable the more often it is uſed, and from thoſe of more exalted condition. That thing of Gentility, if ſtrictly examined, is but a vain Word according to the judgment of reaſon; and therefore people need not be ſo offended, becauſe the Chriſtian Profeſſion requires *not to have the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of Glory with reſpect of Perſons*, Jam. 2. 1. The Apoſtle doth not deſign to confound all the order that is in the World, but chiefly intends thoſe rich Men who were Heathens and without the Church, as appears *verſ.* 6. 7. For ſuch a Character could not belong to Chriſtians at that time; But ſtill it is ſo far obligatory, that we are not to give reverence as the World gives, only upon the account of their fine clothes or wealth. Nor are they hence to take liberty to wax proud and deſpiſe their poor Brethren, whom God hath choſen, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promiſed to them that love him; and therefore others ſhould not keep them of. Nor are they to imagine the diſtance between God and themſelves, is not quite ſo great as between him and the Poor, for what now makes the difference? *Will he eſteem thy Riches? no not Gold, nor all the forces of ſtrength*, Job. 36. 19. *That accepteth not the perſon of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more then the Poor, for they are all the work of his hands*, Job 34. 19. ſo *Pſal.* 62. 9. He ſeeth not as Man ſeeth, for Man looketh on the outward appearance, and if there be gayety without, hath a wonderful conceit of him as ſome goodly one; but *the Lord looketh on the* Amos. 6. 8. *Heart*, and if that be evil, notwithſtanding the fine out ſide, ſuch an one is as odious in his ſight as the moſt abject contemptible perſon is in ours. Let none ſay in his heart, My obedience is ſo much the more acceptable, and I deſerve better of Gods hands, becauſe I am Noble or Rich in the World, and I come to ſerve him when I could ſerve divers luſts and pleaſures. What then? It is thy bounden duty ſo to do, as well as it is of the Luke. 17. meaneſt; What thanks doth he deſerve, who doth only what is his duty to do? As our Lord hath told us in a familiar inſtance; but

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thou ſayeſt, thou canſt do otherwiſe, as others of like Condition do. So likewiſe can your Servants do contrary to what you Command them, but what muſt they expect then? To incur thy Diſpleaſure, and be turned out of thy Service, and it may be thou mayeſt Command him to be beaten and kicked off, this is all thou canſt do. And if thy ſelf doſt not obey our Maſter which is in Heaven, but do thine own Will, his Indignation and Puniſhment will be worſe then all this. Thou mayeſt enjoy the Pleaſures of ſin for a Seaſon if thou wilt, but in ſo doing thou ſhalt not only loſe the recompence of Reward, but procure to thy ſelf never ending Pains, and then what wilt thou get by the Bargain?

Some will ſurmize this to be ſtrange Doctrine to Gentlemen eſpecially, whoſe peculiar priviledge it is to be devoted unto Pleaſure; if it were not for this, they would not differ from others. But are not all under the ſame God, and equally obliged to do according as he requires? And ſurely alſo it is their principal deſign to be Happy, both now and hereafter, all one as they deſire to live pleaſantly next Year as well as this. They are, whether they think of it or not, Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth as their Fathers were. So the preſent Condition is not to be accounted of, for it is nothing in Compariſon of what ſhall ſucceed, and therefore it ſhould be ones whole buſineſs to neglect this, and do all things to ſecure a future Happineſs, for this in a ſhort time will be done away, and ſeem all one as if it had never been. Even at this inſtant it may be obſerved, all former things are gone as a ſhadow that departeth; nothing remains but a faint remembrance, which doth not yield the leaſt Pleaſure, but rather Anguiſh: We preſs nearer to the things which are not ſeen, but eternal Refreſhment or Miſery. If one Man was to ſuffer all that could be laid on him in this World, and to come to Heaven at laſt, he is no more to be pitied then that common Labourer, who doth but his ordinary Days-work, and hath an hundred Pounds for his Reward: So again, if another did enjoy all the Honours and Pleaſures that were to be had, ſpent forty or ſixty Years in the greateſt Mirth without intermixture of trouble or wearineſs, (as none ever did) all would not be a Compenſation for the firſt hour in Hell. We cannot reaſonably grudge to paſs through this preſent Life, (which is not ſo much in reference to the other, as a minute to a Year) if the greateſt Affli-

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ction and Hardſhip were to be laid on us, as long as hereby we ſhall come to receive an infinite good through the Gift of God, and avoid a like inconvenience. If inſtead of a Barren and dry Wilderneſs, we were to march through a fiery Furnace to the Heavenly *Canaan*; If inſtead of having Proſperity mingled with Adverſity, all the days of our Pilgrimage were to be continually evil; If inſtead of denying Luſts, we were abſolutely Commanded to cut off our right Hand and pluck out the right Eye, and to do violence to the leaſt natural Inclination; yet conſidering the Greatneſs of the Joy and Sorrow ſet before us, theſe would have been moſt equal Terms, if it had pleaſed the *Great Lawgiver* (*who is able both to ſave and deſtroy*) to have given them. He might have done ſo, and ſtill be moſt juſt and bountiful. But ſo gracious hath been our God (Break forth into ſinging all ye Inhabitants of the Earth, and Praiſe his Name, which you can never do ſo much as this Love deſerves) to lay no more upon us, then what is ſummed up, *Deut.* 10. 12, 13. *And now Iſrael, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to ſerve the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, To keep the Commandments of the Lord and his Statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good*? Which are contrived to make us as Happy in this Life, as is poſſible for us to be. And though this had been ſufficient requital of it ſelf; yet further throughout his Holy Word is manifeſted eternal Life. *Do this and live*, under which was more comprehended then barely living here, for Tranſgreſſors did ſo. This hath been more clearly made known by him who came ſince; who hath brought Grace and Truth along with him, *Who came not to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfil it*, and make it yet more for our Good; for albeit the *Jews* by reaſon of the Carnality of their Hearts were allowed a more free Enjoyment of the things of this Life, then we are now under the Goſpel, which is upon better Promiſes: The intent whereof is to *Cleanſe our ſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, and to perfect Holineſs in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. So that Senſual Enjoyments are contrary to the Nature of our Holy Calling. They are not abſolutely forbidden, but to be uſed with the greateſt Moderation, and ſo they do not in the leaſt diminiſh from our real Happineſs. Chriſtianity doth refine the Delights of Sence, and make them more excellent. We are to remember how we are way-

way-faring Men, and may receive them ſo far only as to refreſh: But in no ſort to run after, or when obtained to dwell ſo long on them, as hinder our Journey. And therefore to make Pleaſure the buſineſs of Life, or the greater part thereof, (as the manner of ſome) is both contrary to Duty and Happineſs: For though it be imagined, ſuch do take great Delight in them, or otherwiſe would not follow them; yet there are other Reaſons, as they know nothing better, or not how to ſpend the time, and idleneſs is ſo wearyſome, that any thing is to be done rather then endure that; the Humour and Mode of the Age, which they muſt comply with or they ſhall not be reputed Gentile, and ſuch like; for they could forſake thoſe eſteemed Divertiſements, which if they reflect on in the very midſt are tiring empty and unſatisfying. *The Pleaſures of this Life choke the good Seed in the Heart*, which ſhould ſpring up and bring forth Fruit unto everlaſting Life. They do alienate the Heart from God. *If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him, for all that is in the World, the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life is not of the Father, but is of the World*, 1 John 2.15,16. No Man will ſay, he loves theſe more then God (himſelf would then affirm his own Damnation to be juſt) Who is ſo wicked as this amounts unto? But what are Words to be minded, when Deeds manifeſt the contrary? When one who ſaith he loves God, yet will rather break his Laws then deny his own Will; who to follow a ſinful Pleaſure, will omit a neceſſary Duty, it may be determined of him; for thoſe we love, we will do what they will have us. He that will not part with a Paltry Luſt for the ſake of God, when he requires it, if he doth with his mouth make a ſhew of much Love, his Heart runs after that; God who knoweth all things, and from whom Diſſimulation cannot be hid, will judge accordingly; for if any loves ſincerely, he will alſo forſake whatever offends his Beloved. If the Pleaſures are not ſimply unlawful in themſelves, yet all Exceſs is evil and to be avoided, and that is ſo when the end for which they are uſed, is ſufficiently anſwered. Or if they be attended with ill Circumſtances, and prove needleſs occaſions why others and our ſelves ſin, they are to be abſtained from; for if we love God, we muſt have a care of the leaſt thing that doth diſpleaſe him. *Only let your Converſation be as it becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt*, Phil. 1.27.

Ezek. 33. 31.

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Of mistakes in Religion.

There are several mistakes which hinder this, for People take up with less of Religion then they ought. And least I speaking as to them, should be thought to run upon a mistake my self; therefore let it be considered all along, (and not only here, but throughout the whole) whether I speak these things as one willing to find fault; or whether *the Scripture*, nay, *the gracious Gospel, in which they so much trust, do not say the very same.*

It is that common deceit of outward Profession and resting in the Ordinances: This is reputed Religion, but it is shut out from governing their Thoughts, Words and Actions. Let them be any how, at Mens own Power and Command, following their own Inclinations and Humour, and not the Will of God; they run on in Pride, Lust, Sensuality; and if Prayers be read in their Family, they go to Church on the Lords Day, be sure to be a little more serious and repent upon a Death-bed, all is well enough, there is no need of making such a stir and adoe about Religion in their Life-time.

This is the fashionable sort of Godliness, which is used and commended every where; but upon diligent survey it may appear, that the Commandments of God are made of none effect by this Fashion; for the Precepts in the Gospel of obedient and Holy Life signifie nothing, Duty is neglected and sin committed. And if they do but ask God Pardon in a formal way, then they may go on, and Transgress yet against him, and so on. *But be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the Flesh, shall also of the Flesh reap Corruption*, Gal. 6. 7, 8. Every one shall receive according to the Deeds he hath done. *The Sacrifice of the wicked is an Abomination, how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind*, Prov. 21. 27. It was never well with Religion since a certain Mode thereof came up, when they do such Acts, because People of quality do the like; and they do no more then according to the common Standard. This is the moving, though not the only Reason, for they do expect some benefit; when they must die, they would as willingly go to Heaven as the poorer sort, and they trust unto these Prayers which they hope will translate them thither, for though they did live in disobedience, and run unto the same Excess of Riot as others, yet God is merciful and they did ask him forgiveness; Mistaken soul, but also he is Just and True. *There*

See Zech. 7. 5.

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is no reſpect of Perſons with God, for as many as have ſinned without Law ſhall alſo Periſh without Law, and as many as have ſinned in the Law ſhall be judged by the Law, Rom. 2. 11, 12. According as it is written ſo ſhall every one receive, although he doth never ſo much flatter himſelf with idle Fancies and vain Hopes. Take heed and be not deceived in this great and important Concern of your everlaſting Happineſs or Miſery, and to this I exhort you the more, becauſe if you do miſtake once, you are eternally Damned; there is no correcting this Errour, and therefore I ſay again unto you, *Take heed that ye be not deceived.* In the mean while you may know this one thing, that if the faſhionable ſort of Godlineſs will infallibly bring to Heaven, how would that be found true which Chriſt ſaith, *A rich man ſhall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 19. 23. but after this rate he would eaſily, for the modiſh Worſhip requires not much Labour or Pains. And as the Diſciples asked our Lord upon that Saying, *Who then can be ſaved?* So if this were allowed, the queſtion may be reverſed; Who then would Periſh? For who is it that follows the Faſhion in Clothes, Behaviour and manner of Living, and doth it not in Religion alſo? We are ſure God ſpake by his Son, and therefore that is truth which he ſaith; as for this Opinion it is contrary to his Doctrine, and we know not who was the firſt Author of it, unleſs it came from him, who ſetteth up his Kingdom againſt that of Chriſt, whoſe Employment it is to beguile Souls, the old Serpent, the Father of Lyes. And the Falſhood is ſo Tranſparent, that if they would but look throughly they may eaſily ſee it; which they alſo would, if it did not contradict their own Luſts, and ſo they remain willing to be deceived. But if they will, they may be deceived, and ſhall at laſt go away with a Curſe inſtead of a Bleſſing. Thoſe on the left hand *Mat.* 25. it ſeems, did not expect to have ſuch a dreadful Sentence for ſuch a Reaſon pronounced againſt them, as appears, *Ver.* 44. They might think themſelves ſafe enough, becauſe they did not ſee the Lord Jeſus himſelf *an Hungred, or a Thirſt, or a Stranger, or Naked, or Sick, or in Priſon*, for then they ſay, they would have miniſtred unto him. They had the Letter of the Law on their ſide, yet (mark this) their Expoſition was not allowed, but the great Judge gave his own, and by that Condemned them. But ſome now adays have not ſo much to truſt unto, for both the Letter and direct meaning of the Goſpel are againſt them.

This *Peter* teacheth plainly, *For asmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the Flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the Flesh, hath ceased from Sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the Flesh to the Lusts of Men, but to the Will of God: for the time past of our Life may suffice us of have wrought the Will of the Gentiles, when we walked in Lasciviousness, Lusts, Excess of Wine, Revellings, and abominable Idolatries*, 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2, 3. An exact Pourtraiture of our times, for though the last may seem to have been somewhat ceased among us, yet *whose God is his Belly*, or *who saith unto Gold, Thou art my Confidence*, is also an abominable Idolater: Saith another Apostle, *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the Lust of the Flesh, for the Flesh Lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary one to the other*, Gal. 5. 16, 17. And the works of the Flesh are reckoned up further, some of which are esteemed necessary Qualities of a Person of worth and briskness, and the Fruits of the Spirit are thought fit only for dull, sneaking, base born Souls; but not for them: So the Judgment of Gentlemen is contrary to the Gospel. And that which would render one a meet Partaker for the inheritance of the Saints in Light, is in no wise thought comely for those of that Station. *This I say therefore, and testifie in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the Vanity of their mind. Having the understanding darkned, being alienated from the Life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness of their Heart*, (as to saving and spiritual knowledge, for otherwise they are quick-sighted enough) *Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto Lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with Greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ*, Eph. 4. 17, 18, 19, 20. Let any compare these places, and several others in the New Testament with the present Fashion, and then Judge; Whether true Christianity and the modish Gentility are not as contrary and incompatible, as Light and Darkness? And though some Men-pleasers, but not the Servants of Christ would fain reconcile impossible things; yet let none trust to what they teach or say, for we are not to stand or fall according to their corrupt Glosses, but the secrets of all Hearts are to be judged by the Gospel of Jesus. Who will put his own Interpretation on his own Laws, and we are to receive from his mouth the Sentence of Life or Condemnation. Let none therefore be the more Confident, or presume to go on in his Course, because one whom he hath chosen for a guide, tells him

him, he is right enough, and he is willing to believe him; for ſuch can know no otherwiſe then by the Goſpel, and it is agreed on all hands, that thoſe Texts which are given to make wiſe unto Salvation, are ſo plain and eaſie to be underſtood that they need no Interpretation at all; and it cannot be that any, who come in ſincerity to be informed, ſhould be deceived in them. But thus it is, Men are ſtrangely given to their own Luſts; they cannot endure to reſiſt the Allurement of ſenſual Pleaſures, and are not willing to bring down their haughty minds, and yet would partake of the Promiſes of the Goſpel, and avoid its Threatnings; ſo there muſt be an expedient found out to do all this. How ready are they to hearken unto, and embrace every propoſal made to this end? Either by their own deceitful Hearts, or by him who works with all deceivableneſs in them that Periſh: Or ſome others have been found, who inſtead of *ſhewing People their Tranſgreſſion, and the Houſe of Jacob their ſins*, have ſoothed them up and concealed. *Who have ſtrengthened the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way, by promiſing him Life*, Ezek. 13. 22. Who being willing to pleaſe their great Benefactors, do according as they would have, *Speak ſmooth things and Propheſie deceits*, Iſa. 30. 10. Who know no ſooner way to oblige them, then by dictating Doctrines ſutable to their ungodly Luſts and Inclinations; that they may live the Life of the wicked, and die the Death of the righteous; follow all iniquity here, and receive the Crown for Well-doing hereafter. And this is done by divulging ſome pleaſing (but wrong and miſ-applyed) Notions of Gods wonderful Mercy; of Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and relying wholly on him for Salvation; of a formal daily Repentance which is well enough, if more ſincere and perfect on the Death bed; the Doctrine of partial Obedience; of Deſires and Reſolutions (which are for the moſt part Mockery or Non-ſenſe) the miſtakes of Sins of infirmity, for the works of the Fleſh and unrighteouſneſs come under theſe; of diſtinguiſhing between the Counſels and Precepts of the Goſpel, ſtretching it further then they have Warrant from, 1 *Cor.* 7. 25. What they have a mind to follow thoſe are the Commands, and what they have not is of the other ſort, and then they ſin not in neglecting it. And ſuch like. Out of which may be patched up a fine ſort of Divinity to pleaſe the Great Ones here, by giving them Encouragement, that after they have gratified to the utmoſt all their Mic. 3. 5, 8.

wicked Lusts, and bid defiance to the Almighty in their Life-time, yet they can appease him again slightly, and when they will' But certainly this is quite to leave the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, to go on to imperfection, not laying again, but utterly over-throwing the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God; which if such as pleases him, must consist in Obedience, as well as to believe that he is. But one would think some did not so much, or what is worse, *Think that the God-head was like unto Gold or Silver, or Stone graven by Art and Mans device*, Acts 17.29. for they would stamp their own Impressions, and more derogate from his Glory, and despise him in their own imaginations then they did, *Rom.* 1.23. for these would make God such an one as they would have him, render him a Lyar, alter and change his very Nature, beseech him to determine his everlasting Gospel, rather then he shall not save them. Or else how can they ever dream of thrusting themselves into his Holy City above, any other way then by which God hath appointed, nay, going contrary to what he hath Chalkt out. *Our Saviour Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purifie unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works*, Tit. 2.14. Now these defeat the very end of his Coming, for according to their supposal Men may still live in all iniquity, and instead of being zealous for good Works, they need do none at all, but cast themselves intirely on Christs satisfaction and Merits. The foregoing Verse is, *The grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared unto all Men, Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and Godly in this present World*; but according to the daubing of some, if we do the contrary all our Life-long, and we do, that is impossible, but say or wish as much before the last Gasp of Breath is gone, we may lay hold of it. But hold there, Salvation is not Mens to give, they cannot so much as redeem their own Souls, much less barter with Almighty God for others. We are to have the Reward from his hands only, and he hath said already on what terms he will give it, *Christ became the Author of eternal Salvation unto all that obey him*, Heb. 5.9. and to none else. The Priests may not prescribe unto him (who is a God of infinite Sovereignty and Power) Laws of their own Head, nor parcel out the Objects of his Bounty; they may never partake of it themselves, much less be so impudent

pudent as to ſet it out for others. Themſelves are to ſtand among the number of the Criminals, for ſince *they have corrupted the Word of God*, 2 Cor. 2. 17. Inſtead of warning the Wicked from his way, ſuch have been occaſion why he ſinned yet more, they ſhall receive greater Condemnation. Nevertheleſs thoſe ſhall not eſcape who being led away with their own luſts and enticed, do gladly receive their plauſible Opinions and Sayings, but ſhall periſh for all, *Mat.* 15. 14. *Ezek.* 33. 8. *Iſa.* 9. 16. Though the Serpent *Gen.* 3. beguiled the Woman, and the Woman beguiled the Man, yet the curſe was pronunced on all. And it will be no excuſe in the laſt day, Lord, the Teachers who came in thy name told us we might do ſuch things and live, for Chriſt had foretold that falſe ones ſhould ariſe, and commanded to take heed leaſt any Man deceive you. He left his Word behind to try the Doctrines whether they be of Men or no, by which he will judge the World, and not by this or that Doctors Opinion: Let others now put what meaning they will upon the commands of Chriſt, yet if he ſhould interpret them otherwiſe, every one knoweth whoſe muſt be taken, and by which we are to abide. His judgment and expoſition will be according to Righteouſneſs and Truth, whatever others make now: If they turn the Word up and down to make a gain of Godlineſs, and procure the favour of thoſe above them, yet the Moſt High God remains immutable, and cannot lie; let them make what alterations they will, yet one cometh to rectifie: Saith Chriſt, *He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not my Words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him at the laſt day*, John 12. 48. So it is moſt reaſonable he ſhould, and he ſhall be the alone diſtributer according to the very intention and meaning of them. Iſa. 24. 5.

This is neceſſary to be inſiſted on, becauſe there is a wonderfull deceit cheriſhed amongſt the greater ſort, who though they live in Wickedneſs and Pleaſures, and have no real inward ſence of Religion; Yet if they can get a Man in black, unto whom they make a partial relation of themſelves; that they are ſinners indeed, but who is not? Howbeit, they do this and that good thing, which they are ſure to tell him of and magnifie; and then if he not making a through examination, acquaints them in general their condition is good enough towards God, and they will go to Heaven through his Mercies in Chriſt Jeſus, and intimate as if there was no ſuch need for more; they forthwith cry him

up

up for an honeſt fellow, and hug themſelves, now they can have their conſolation here and hereafter, that they will go on in their courſe. The abuſe and corruption this way cannot be vindicated from thoſe who call themſelves Paſtors of the True Church, for there are ſome who underſtand not what they ſay, and whereof they affirm, who would be glad of a good Table or Preferment; Others know better, but ſpeak what they ſhould not to comply with the cuſtom of the World or a Potent Neighbour; but it is abominable among thoſe of the Roman Church: The Prieſts there have modelled ſuch a Religion (which they call Chriſtian, but is contrary to the very nature, deſign and end of it, as any thing can be) as is moſt agreeable to ſinful fleſh and blood. They may be more properly ſtiled followers of *Mahomet*, then of the holy *Jeſus*, for they have uſed the very ſame Arts and Policy, though in a different way, to ingratiate their Religion in the World, but eſpecially amongſt thoſe of higher rank by adopting it to their pride and wicked deſires; for if it were true what they ſaid, none that had Money enough could miſs of Heaven. O moſt damnable Impoſtors! as if *the gift of God could be purchaſed with Money*, Acts 8. 20. As if that Man from whom they pretend to derive all their infallibility, were a liar when he ſaid, *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, from your vain converſation received by tradition from your Fathers*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. But according to theſe Men of corrupt minds, if ye have plenty of theſe, ye may ſtill abide in your vain converſation: Who have made a concord between *Chriſt* and *Belial*, and laid down a Scheme how Men may live contrary to the Goſpel and yet obtain the benefits thereof; who have cryed up *Peace, Peace*, to that way, *where is no Peace.*

For if we conſider ſeriouſly the great diſpleaſure God Almighty hath to ſin, as is ſhewed forth, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, 6. For one ſingle Act of Diſobedience, he entailed a curſe on *Adam* and all his Poſterity, Of ſix hundred thouſand of his own People, whom he had brought out of *Ægypt*, there were but two only which went into the Promiſed Land; and *Moſes* himſelf who had ſo often ſtood in the gap between an enraged God and a provoking People, yet he was not admitted there. But to leave thoſe under the Law which worketh Wrath, and by which every Man is accurſed; come we to the Goſpel which taketh that away, yet of the four ſorts of the hearers of the word, there is but one good:

When

When one asked our Saviour, *Lord, are there few that be ſaved?* He ſaid unto them, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate*, Luke 13. 24. Which ſignifies the uſing more endeavour, than lazy and negligent Worſhippers can pretend unto. And then there is *Gal.* 5. 24. *Mat.* 11. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 17. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 10. If theſe and more places which do declare the ſtrictneſs of the Goſpel Precepts, were impartially weighed in the Spirit of our minds, not putting in the ballance againſt them fleſhly luſts or corrupt reaſon, How can we imagine a perfunctory and formal courſe of Godlineſs (though it be never ſo much in vogue) will ever carry a Man to Heaven? for none can go thither who obeys not the Goſpel. Let Men promiſe to themſelves a future bleſſedneſs upon the Whims and Fancies of their own brain, or elſe the Opinion of others; yet they are to remember once again, we are not to ſtand or fall by theſe, but the Book of the everlaſting Goſpel ſhall be opened, and it ſhall be according to what is written therein without humane Gloſſes, but according to the Wiſdom of God, who ſhall judge the World in Righteouſneſs. Neither let any one therefore at preſent be fearful, leaſt when he hath run well, he ſhall not obtain, by reaſon of ſome ſence which God may put on his own Laws, which his poor Servant is not aware of; for God is not unfaithfull that he ſhould deceive any: and on what conditions the promiſe of Eternal Life is given, is ſo clearly delivered, that it is impoſſible any one who hath but common ſence ſhould be miſtaken as to them. The great Men cannot, for *they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God*, Jer. 5. 5. *The Scriptures are able to make thee Wiſe unto Salvation, through Faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. What pertains to this end is ſo clear and obvious, that they muſt be damnably wreſted, if any one do err herein; There is ſuch a wonderful agreement concerning the neceſſary things, and ſuch plainneſs of expreſſion, that none can be deceived, but he who hath a mind to be deceived; nor any be ignorant, but he that would be ignorant: ſo all are left without excuſe.

Suffer your ſelves to be admoniſhed, who now *walk according to the courſe of this World, among whom you have your converſation in the luſts of the fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh, and of the mind*, Eph. 2. 2, 3. Conſider well what you do: You that ſay it is as good to be out of the World as out of the Faſhion, can you really think it as good to be ſomewhere elſe too, as out of the Faſhion?

Fashion? Will Company make that more tolerable? Do not look upon this as vain Words, for it is a certain truth; if you follow the Multitude, you will not be among those few in the narrow way that leadeth unto life; and you must then be amongst those many of the other way. It is the command of God, *Thou shalt not follow a Multitude to do evil*, Exod. 23. 2. Every one that lives and converses in the midst thereof, must out of his own experience and knowledge assent to what the Apostle saith, *The whole World lieth in Wickedness*, 1 John. 5. 19. If thou hast no mind to be *condemned with the World*, 1 Cor. 11. 31. Do not comply with the sinful customs thereof; Remember what thou didst promise unto God in thy Baptism, that thou wouldst renounce the vain Pomp and Glory of the World, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wouldst not follow or be led by them. This thou didst then promise by thy Sureties, which promise when thou camest to Age, thy self wert bound to perform; and thou didst take it immediately upon thy self, either at Confirmation, receiving the Sacrament, or full purpose of mind; or if thou hast not, how canst thou expect the benefits thereof? How art thou in the Christian Church? If thou hast not taken it upon thee, yet God will judge thee; and if thou hast, it is a fearful thing to be a Lyar unto God. If thou thinkest this a thing of Form, the custom of the Country, then thou art a Christian only in Name, and for all that to have thy Portion with Hypocrites and Unbelievers.

But thou hast a distinction to elude this, and all which hath been hitherto spoken, *viz.* The Pomp and Glory of the World there meant, and those places in the New Testament afore-cited, refer only to the Idolatrous customs of the *Gentiles* at that time, and signifie nothing to those of the present Age. This is apparently false, for in the generality of those Texts, there is no mention made of Idolatrous Customs; but *of Lust*, *excess of Wine*, *excess of Riot*, *Revellings*, *Vanity of Mind*; they are somewhat intended, but not only. A full Answer is given to all this from *Acts* 2. 39. *The promise is unto you, and your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* And seeing Christ is to have a Church for all Generations to come, even to the end of the World; undoubtedly he designed the New Testament which is Sealed with his own Blood, and became of force by his Death as a means for those to believe on him,

and

and as a Law to govern their Manners, not only for thoſe which ſaw and heard him in the Fleſh; but for their Children and Childrens Children, even to all poſterity for evermore. It is further decreed that he ſhall judge the World by the Goſpel: Now if he ſhould (as moſt certainly he will) underſtand them according to the plain and common ſence of the ſame Words; What then will become of thoſe who truſt unto this Objection? Which if admitted true would ſtrike at the Root of all Religion, and by further degrees baniſh it quite out of the World. But if here Men ſhould ſhake the fear of God from their minds, by cunning Evaſions, excuſe themſelves from the Obligation of his Commandments; yet they ſhall never eſcape that vengeance which now dogs them at the heels, and will be ſure to ſeize on them when out of this life: all their Sophiſtry will ſignifie nothing at all, when they come to appear before his Judgment-Seat. Though at preſent they are ſo pleaſed, if by a nice diſtinction they can ſave themſelves from the obedience of ſuch precepts; yet when he diſcovers the deceit they intended to put on him, and maketh them of none effect, How muſt they be confounded before Angels and Men at the laſt and terrible day? Indeed if we were to be judged by thoſe of like infirmities with our ſelves, who know nothing of our thoughts, then there might be ſome hopes by crafty excuſes and ſubterfuges to palliate our caſe before them; but Seeing *God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordained*, Acts 17. 31. *Who is the Power of God, and Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. *Who will have all the Churches know, that I am he which ſearcheth the reins and hearts*, Rev. 2. 23. How then can they expect by ſome fooliſh fancie, to out-wit him, or that their cloſe intents ſhall not be made known in that day, when Chriſt Jeſus ſhall judge the ſecrets of Men according to the Goſpel? *And before him ſhall be gathered all Nations, and he ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats*, Mat. 25. 32. And then ſeveral, who think themſelves ſure enough at preſent, will be deceived in their Expectation. *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name? and in thy Name caſt out Devils? And in thy Name done many wonderful Works? and then will I profeſs unto them I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 22, 23. Every one is ſenſible there is no little Torment in a Worldly diſappointment, but in a thing of ſo great Moment it muſt be inexpreſſible

anguish; The indignation will be so great, that they would utterly destroy themselves if possible, rather then see themselves rejected by God and that happiness with him, and to go along with the accursed crew into everlasting Misery. No words can throughly set forth that discontent and raging those wretched Souls must groan under; and therefore least any one who casts his eye upon these lines, should come amongst their number, to prevent this danger, let him look upon the verse foregoing, *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven*, Mat. 7. 21. This place, which is easy to be understood, should take away their confidence, who rest only in a formal course of Devotion; for here we are told it is not that, but doing his Will (which is revealed in Scripture) that must bring us to Heaven. What can be more plain? and which if throughly considered of, would take away all those destructive mistakes we have been labouring all this while to remove.

Hath any one a mind to go to Heaven, or escape Hell? He need not ascend up thither in curious Speculations, or study whither it be possible to climb up, and wrack his brains which way to accomplish it; so neither need he descend into the lowermost parts of the Earth to search where the place of Torment is, that he may avoid it. But *the Word is nigh thee*, which shews the way to the one or the other: They are both set before thee, Choose whether you will have. Never mind what others do. Every one is to bear his own burthen, and to give account of himself before God; What they do, what is that to thee? Look thou to thy self, thou art more sensible of thine own Happiness or Misery then all the World besides; it were better for thee that thou wert Happy and all Mankind besides Miserable, then that thou wert Miserable, and all the rest Happy. Whosoever shall come to dwell with everlasting Burnings, it will be but a poor mitigation that he had abundance of fellow sufferers; When any one now is afflicted with violent pains of Stone or Strangury, it is but a small relief to come and tell him that another person is tormented so as he is; nay, if thousands were in the same manner, he had rather be at ease then to suffer with them, though they be of the greatest Rank and Quality. I have heard of one, who in the time of Frolick and Madness, did say, he was for going to Hell, because he should have his esteemed good Company there; but none can seriously consider and determine so, and if God should take him at

his

his word, he would ever repent his folly; If he could have it for wiſhing, he would be out of their company, and be contented with all his heart to wander alone (as the Saints have done here for a ſmall time in Dens and Caves of the Earth) for all Eternity. Neither let him think his condition will be good enough, becauſe he ſhall fare as well as the moſt, for the dregs of the Cup of Gods Wrath will not be leſs bitter, the more are to ſuck them out. Who is he that will ſtick to his old Companions in the day of their Temporal Adverſity, if thereby he ſhall involve himſelf in the ſame? Such indeed (though one of a thouſand) may be found, for there is hopes of getting out again; but what Man in his right wits would plunge himſelf into a bottomleſs Pit, from whence it is impoſſible ever to recover himſelf, only to gratify ſome Friends? Friends did I call them, who are more ill-natured then thoſe in Hell; *for the Rich Man did pray that ſome one might be ſent to his Fathers Houſe, for he had five Brethren, that he may teſtifie unto them, leaſt they alſo come to this place of Torment.* Luke 16. He did not imagine it would be any ſatisfaction to have the more company there; and if ſome now in the fleſh are of a worſe diſpoſition to require ſuch an unreaſonable thing, it can be no incivility to deny them. They are Fiends and Devils incarnate; What good breeding can it be to oblige ſuch, who are willing to bring others under the ſame condemnation with themſelves? O come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly let not thine honour be united; *My Son if Sinners entice thee, conſent thou not, ſurely in vain the net is ſpread in ſight of any Bird, and they lay wait for their own blood, they lurk privily for their own lives,* Prov. 1. 10, 17, 18. If thou comeſt in among them, thou wilt endanger thine own alſo. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil Men,* Prov. 4. 14, 15.

It hath been one of the chief policies of *Satan* to work ſin into the Faſhion, that being the ſtanding rule of great Mens Actions; for they are not ſo much led away with Reaſon, as with Cuſtom, they muſt do what others of like quality do, they had rather err with them then be in the right way by themſelves. But they do not attend, that this is *like natural brute Beaſts made to be taken and deſtroyed, and ſhall utterly periſh in their own corruption,* 2 Pet. 2. 12. For in the mean while they follow the drove, not knowing whither they go. As Sheep or Oxen going together to Slaughter, they paſs along upon the Road not thinking of the ſhambles till

they come to them, and then they will give back, but are forced in. Who are hurrying in the way to Death and Hell, when they come near the first, they wish they had not walked in such a way, but in vain; Time past cannot be recalled in a thought, neither will a desire at last gasp be accepted for a well spent life. Had you not better consider before hand, and turn aside from the vain and sinful customs of the People? It will not be a sufficient exchange for the loss of Present and Eternal Happiness, to be a little puft up with following the humours of the Majority. If thou wilt renounce their evil wayes, another may do after thy Example, and then a third, and so the greater part may come to serve and obey the Lord, and then the Fashion would be of that side. I am confident there are the inward wishes of many to this; What a blessed World would this be? In a brave and noble attempt every one should try to be the leading Man, but now *in th se days the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*; and to ascend up into the City of the living God, is a more Glorious Enterprize, then to scale the Walls of the strongest Fort in the whole Earth, yet none sets forward in this Warfare. Some may be seen to follow afar off, but every one takes heed of being foremost; The chief of the People do slink, and come most behind: They do not care to march in the first Rank next to the Captain of our Salvation, nor yet to Encourage others. How vastly different are Mens Actions in reference to Heavenly, and the things of this World? Every one that is not a down-right unbeliever must acknowledge that they are greater then these, yet how Cold and Sluggish are our affections to the better part? How warm and lively after these which shall fail from us? as we see they have done, and do daily vanish from others. Either the Possessions are taken from the Owners, or the Owners are snatched from their Possessions. If the things of God were duly considered, they would be as much practised and universally esteemed as those trifles and bubbles (things of no substance, and yet of short continuance) which the Devil offers to beguil Men of a Kingdom. Pride and Lust are so established in the World, that there is no removing of them, otherwise then by the Grace of God; which will effectually do it, where it is received. There is hope yet, notwithstanding the Folly and Degeneracy of the greater part of Mankind, that as some *have escaped the Corruption that is in the World through*

through Luſt, 1 Pet. 2. 14. Others whom God ſhall bring to Faith and Knowledge, will do the like: The Lord add to the number of them, that ſin and iniquity may looſe ground, obedience and righteouſneſs may increaſe and flouriſh in the Earth. But if this were as univerſally practiſed as the other, how would be ſeen the Tryal and Excellency thereof, for then People would follow after it for the ſame Reaſon, without intention to pleaſe and Good-will towards God, as now they do not come up to that degree which is required thereof. To do but what is common, and others do the ſame, there is no thanks nor reward for that, *Mat.* 5. 46. *Luke* 6. 33. If there was no oppoſition, there could be no Vertue. And if good things were highly eſteemed among Men, how ſhould we know whether any one would endure Shame and Reproach for them? *Many of the chief Rulers believed on Chriſt, but would not confeſs him, for they loved the praiſe of Men more then the praiſe of God*, John 12. 42, 43. And even now ſeveral Perſons of note and quality have a good liking to his Doctrine and Commandments, and wou'd live more exactly according to them, if it were not for leſſening their Reputation and Eſteem in the World.

See Pſ. 66. 3, and Iſa. 60. 14.

But let theſe conſider, Mark 8. 34, 35, 36, 37, 38. *He that loveth Father or Mother more then me, is not worthy of me*, Mat. 10. 37. So neither can he be thought worthy of him, who loves his own Honour more then him. *How can ye believe, which receive Honour one of another?* John 5. 44. And though Honour is ſuch a precious thing through the innate Pride of our Hearts, that we can more eaſily part with dear Life it ſelf; yet he requires both, when thereby he is to be glorified and obeyed, *Here is the Faith and Patience of the Saints*, Here is the difficulty of a Chriſtian, to forſake beloved Luſts, which are as dear as his right Eye; to part with Honour which is more precious then his own Hearts-blood, when our Lord requires it. This makes it hard for a rich Man to be ſaved. A threefold Temptation doth beſet him from the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life. Though all are very apt to ſeduce him from the obedience and love of God, yet the laſt to ſome is of greater force then the reſt; for there be which can contemn their abundance, uſe, but not truſt in it; Who being of a knowing Temper can forſake Pleaſures; but Honour and Reputation they cannot, at leaſt will not give up. They do all things to advance it, whether ſin-

ful.

ful or not, is no Consideration, or no hindrance: They refrain from doing that, which the Law of God and the dictate of their own mind, prompt unto, if they once think they shall lose somewhat of their Esteem. To make a sincere and honest Profession of Godliness is not Fashionable in this crooked and perverse Generation; and therefore though they may well approve of it, they will be sure to keep it within, and not discover it by a suitable Conversation. The Apostolical rule is, *Whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. but these consult their own to the neglect of that. This is a distinct Principle of Action, which not only makes it self equal, but exalts it self above the Will of God, for by that they are guided, and if led to any thing contrary to the other, they consent unto it, and put him off with a, Good Lord pardon me. They lightly regard the Law of the Most High, and think to come off with a Complemental Ejaculation. In Honour they prefer themselves before him, and yet vainly dream to pacifie him with a few words of Course: For which of you would be thus served? If your own Servants should refuse to do such Commandments of yours, because they thought it an under-valuing, and they should lose their Credit among their Fellow-Servants; what would you do to such proud Fellows, but turn them out of Doors? And if they should come from time to time, and formally ask your Pardon for not doing your Will; and yet still through Pride refuse to do it, you would be so much the more incensed against such Rascals. The Case is just the same between God and thy Self: however great thou art in thine own and the Worlds Opinion, thou art more inferiour to Him, then the meanest Scullion beneath thy self; and it may be said unto thee, with the same measure thou measurest, it shall be meted out to thee, O thou wicked Servant. What canst thou expect but to be rejected by God, who in the time of thy Tryal wouldst not do his Will, but only in what was agreeable to thy temporal advantage and Honour. When *the day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord*, Mal. 4. 1. Will he accept of Pride as an excuse for Sin, and Omission of Duty? Because thou wouldst not be less esteemed of by thy Fellow-Servants. Whom were you bound to seek Honour of, they or him? It is better to be despised by all the World, then by him alone; and if that be so irksome now, much more

more would it be to *riſe up to everlaſting Shame and Contempt*; and therefore it is reaſonable to ſubmit unto the leſs to avoid the greater. Saith the Lord Chriſt, *If any Man ſerve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there ſhall alſo my Servant be: if any Man ſerve me, him will my Father Honour*, John 12 26. Reſign them up all unto him, thy Body, Subſtance, Fame, Friends, Liberty and Life: And it may be he will ſo diſpoſe of them all, that thou mayeſt keep them, and be his Servant; or if any be taken away, it may be reſtored double. Or whatever is loſt with ſome, may be gained with others. Yet if not, Obedience is more excellent and acceptable with God, when it is with full purpoſe of Heart, come what will come, Life or Death, Shame and Dishonour, good Report and evil Report. The Service is pure and ſincere, when all Selfiſh ends and ſiniſter Conſiderations are baniſhed. When he Labours to approve himſelf unto God, and not as in the ſight of Men. When he can be content to walk in obſcurity and Contempt all his Life long, and make ſure of his Approbation, which is laſting, and carries Reward with it; which will make ſufficient Compenſation for want of a ſhort and empty Applauſe. The more he is deſpiſed by Men for Well-doing, the more he ſhall be had in Honour by God. If the Heart be ſeaſoned with Grace, it is eaſie to deſpiſe the Shame, which others would caſt upon him, and then it can neither diſturb, nor hinder from going on in the good way.

Too many are beaten off by Reproaches, and others are diſcouraged under them; and therefore it may not be improper, foraſmuch as of Chriſt it was written, *The Reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me*; *ſo Arm your ſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind.* The common imputations, which at this time of day are caſt on them who continue in all Obedience, are, Preciſeneſs, Folly, and Singularity. But had thoſe who aſperſe herewith ſo much Wit and Ingenuity, (for ſuch Revilings are never the effect of the Grace and Fear of God) to conſider throughly of that Rule, by which all Chriſtians are to walk, and they muſt go exactly according to it, if they would have the Peace conſequent to ſo doing, and the future Reward thereof; then I ſay, that they cannot reaſonably condemn him who lives moſt according to it. It is eſteemed no fault punctually to obſerve National Laws, Eccleſiaſtical Canons, and Humane Conſtitutions. And then

Of Reproaches. 1 Pet. 4, 1, 4. Rom. 15. 3. Pſal. 15. 3.

then why ſhould they be blamed, who call themſelves Followers of Jeſus, to do according to all the Laws he hath given them? Eſpecially when himſelf hath ſaid, *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you*, John 15. 14. If he calls them Friends, there is no Reaſon why others ſhould call them Fools, unleſs who eſteem his Doctrine Fooliſhneſs; but moſt certainly they ſhould not, who *name the name of Chriſt*, and do not *depart from iniquity*; and therefore ſpeak in Contempt of thoſe which do, hereby to excuſe themſelves from not living according to the Rules of their Profeſſion. But by thus doing, *They add iniquity to their iniquity, and not come into thy Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. 69. 27. It was the ſaying of one, The Speculative Atheiſt was the greateſt wonder in the World, except one, and he was the Practical Atheiſt. Nothing can be ſo ſtrange and fooliſh, as he who believes the Goſpel, and yet doth live accordingly, but the greateſt part of Mankind being of this number, they would reverſe this if poſſible, and account him a ſimple Fellow, who lives according to it: So mightily hath Satan prevailed in the hearts of Men, as to make them believe any thing which may advance his Kingdom. But this is the moſt unaccountable folly that can be, and not fit to be entertained among reaſonable Souls. Good God! how ridiculous is it that they who profeſs to believe, that keeping thy Commandments is the way to Eternal Life, yet ſhould account thoſe fooliſh who do them? They All agree, it is a Mans higheſt Wiſdom to uſe the right means to obtain the greateſt Happineſs; they acknowledge Obedience to all Gods Laws is ſuch, and yet they would fain eſteem him fooliſh who doth thus: ſo they would raiſe a falſe concluſion from true and right premiſes, which is impoſſible, and here as abſurd, as any thing in the World can be. One would admire that Men of underſtanding ſhould ſwallow down ſuch an Opinion; it is taken in with the generality without conſideration, for they know that in worldly concerns, when one is in purſuit of a Temporal Good, as an Eſtate, Office or preferment, it is Wiſdom to make uſe of all the probable means which may help towards obtaining thereof, to leave no ſtone unturned; for they ſay, a Man can never be too ſure: Yet theſe believe there is an Heaven, which doth exceed whatever is here below; that it is every Mans buſineſs to get him an Intereſt therein, that the moſt likely way to get thither, is to do according to all thoſe Directions in Scripture, and why then ſhould not ſuch an one be reputed

reputed Wiſe? He ſeems to Act moſt prudently, if judged according to the meaſures of worldly Wiſdom. Much more is he approved of, if determined by the true Notions of that, which *was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the Earth was*, Prov. 8. 23. Let all the World ſay or think what they will, Wiſdom and Truth are immutable, and cannot be toſſed too and fro by the Breath of fooliſh talking People; they are Emanations from the Divine Nature, and in this corrupted State, where truth is hated, Wiſdom cryeth out, but few hear the voice, they are not to be found among the multitude, ſo that one muſt be wiſer then the Generality, or he will not be wiſe at all, as the end will prove: When it ſhall be better to have been among Chriſt's little Flock, then the common Herd. It is better to *ſhine as Stars for ever and ever*, although we now like them move contrary; then to *walk according to the Courſe of this World*, and to have a Portion with the Children of diſobedience.

That Effect of Singularity which is ſo much feared, intitles unto the Bleſſing, *Luke* 6. 22, 23. the Hatred of Men procures unto him the love of God. To be a Chriſtian not only in Name, but in Deed and in Truth, is to be a Singulariſt in the common Opinion; for if any *obſerves all things whatſoever Chriſt hath Commanded*, he is a Man by himſelf, an Humouriſt, only becauſe he will not ſerve his Lord by halves as the generality of Mankind do. But let not this ſeem ſtrange, as if ſome new thing happened unto him; for the Saints heretofore were Singulariſts, *Noah* in the Old World, *Lot* in *Sodom*, *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, *Joſeph* in *Egypt*, *Moſes* in *Midian*, *Daniel* in *Babylon*. And by the way theſe were Men of higher Rank, and yet were not aſhamed to ſerve the Lord in wicked Generations. Undoubtedly there were others in their days, who did ſo likewiſe, yet but few in Compariſon of the ungodly. *Elias* is recorded in that general Apoſtacy of the *Jews* to ſay, *I am left alone*, *But what ſaith the Anſwer of God unto him? I have reſerved my ſelf ſeven thouſand Men, who have not bowed the knee unto the image of* Baal. They were about one in an hundred computed according to the number of the *Iſraelites*, and then they were liable to this Denomination. God's faithful People have been the feweſt in number ever ſince the World began, his Church may be compared to an heap of Corn mingled with Chaff, wherein a Grain appears here and there by it ſelf, compaſſed

Of Singularity.

Jer. 12. 9.

Rom. 11. 3, 4.

about with the other, but though it lies ſeveral in the heap, *it ſhall be gathered*, Mat. 3. 12. and Singularity ſhall at length ceaſe, and end in the Communion of Saints. Whilſt they are in the World, they are not of the World: A thing is called from the greater part, and when it ſignifies the People contained therein, it is in Scripture Language taken for the wicked, becauſe they are the moſt. And not to do as the Generality doth, is reckoned Singularity; now to ſhew forth a Chriſtian Converſation in good Works, is not what the moſt, but only few do: And therefore it is thus accounted of. But let none be diſcouraged with this term of Reproach; for even the Men of this World who decry it ſo much, would with all their Hearts be ſingular if they might; none would refuſe to be the only rich Man in his Pariſh; neither would the Ambitious refuſe an high Title of Honour, becauſe none in the Countrey beſides had the like. This is the thing they aim at, to be more wealthy and honourable then the reſt of their Neighbours: Every private Perſon would willingly be more Happy then others, and will uſe the means to be ſo: And it is eſteemed no fault to direct their Actions accordingly, but Wiſdom for every one to advance his own intereſt as much as he can, although he gets above others. This is the Senſe of mankind as to worldly Matters, and there is the very ſame Reaſon, it ſhould be ſo likewiſe in *things pertaining to endleſs Life*. Every ſingle Perſon would ſave his own Soul, and be for ever Happy; if he ſhould miſcarry, he bears all the loſs himſelf; and others will never be able to help him. Why then ſhould he be blamed, if he trys to ſecure himſelf? And ſeeing there is but one way, which is Godlineſs, wherefore ſhould he be leſſened for walking in it? Becauſe others do not, that is their fault, not his, he muſt look to himſelf. He is to ſtand upon his own Legs, and therefore it muſt be his buſineſs to take heed he doth not fall; for if he ſhould and others fall with him, he only would feel the Pain of it, and they when fallen will not be able to help him up. It is commonly ſaid, every Man hath Power over himſelf; let him follow his own Humour; and though if we are toucht with a feeling of Humane Nature, we ſhould endeavour to do another Good, and be inſtrumental to his Happineſs; yet it muſt be a ſtrange Savageneſs, when inſtead of doing this, we are Angry and Malign him only, for endeavouring after it himſelf. If he doth well, who lives according to Gods word, why do we not imitate him?

him? If ill, then *O Lord thou haſt deceived him, and he is deceived*, Jer. 20. 7. Such an one we neither envy nor hate, but Pity. But the Lord who Sanctifies his Choſen through his Truth, and gives them his Word which is Truth, can in no wiſe be ſaid to deceive any. If then, he that comes unto him unfeignedly, neither doth evil, nor yet is in an Errour, why ſhould the World be ſo enraged againſt him? Either this or nothing is to hate without a Cauſe, See *John.* 7. 7. *John* 15. 18, 19, 23, 24, 25. There is an Enmity in the Seed of the Serpent againſt God's Children, *Gen.* 3. 15. *Rev.* 12. 17. they will ſay all manner of evil of them falſly, if they think their lying may be concealed and gain Credit with others: How glad are they of an appearance of evil to object againſt them? And to ſpread abroad a dubious Story aggravated with the moſt ill Circumſtances, that malicious Wit can invent. If concerning a Religious Perſon, it paſſes current and uncontradicted; but if of another, there will be enough to make Excuſes for him, to Examine throughly and detect it of Falſhood in one part, and ſo daſh it in the whole, but as to him they are ready to add ſomething to render it more odious. *The wicked plotteth againſt the juſt, and gnaſheth upon him with his Teeth*, Pſal. 37. 12. And therefore they caſt Reproaches, laugh and do any thing to blemiſh his Fame and Reputation. This hath been, and is the uſage of the World. And who will come to ſerve the Lord in ſincerity, muſt provide accordingly. *If your Feet be ſhod with the Preparation of the Goſpel of Peace*, Eph. 6. 15. You will find therein ſo many Bleſſings and Promiſes on this occaſion, that notwithſtanding all hindrances you may run the way of God's Commandments. *Above all taking the ſhield of Faith, wherewith ye ſhall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the wicked*, Verſe 16. for if you believe the good things God hath prepared for them that love him, and on the other hand his Terrours for the diſobedient, certainly ſuch a light thing as the unſavoury Breath of talking People cannot counterpoiſe the Love or Diſpleaſure, of ſo Merciful, ſo Juſt a God. John 17. 17.

When any turn from ſin, they muſt expect Mockings and Reproaches from their old Acquaintance and Partners in iniquity; for having done it already, *They think it ſtrange, that you run not with them to the ſame Exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you*, 1 Pet. 4. 4, 5. But rather Pity, then be terrified by them, *For theſe ſpeak evil of the things they underſtand not*, 2 Pet. 2. 12. There is no Reaſon

why they ſhould deride thoſe who leave their Company and the evil of their doings; for they are poſting on in the wrong way, and (unleſs prevented in like manner) their loud and impious Laughter will ſhortly ceaſe in weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.

Of Humility.

Thus hath been viewed the great ſtumbling Block, which hinders the Gallants of our Age from coming into the right way: They have an inward Approbation, and would fain ſave their Souls; but Reproach or leſſening of Reputation they cannot ſubmit unto. Hear what our Saviour ſaith, *Verily I ſay unto you, except ye be converted and become as little Children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 18. 3. There are no ſubſequent words of Exemption for Men of Honour and Renown; He hath indeed ſhewed how they may be ſo there likewiſe, *Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf as this little Child, the ſame is greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Verſe 4. Let not the mighty Ones of the Earth think here is running out upon ſtrange Doctrine, for the end why they take Pride upon themſelves is to be great, and a way is ſhewed (though it may ſeem odd, yet true) how to be ſo. The Goſpel runs contrary to things here, *If any Man among you ſeemeth to be wiſe in this World, let him become a Fool that he may be wiſe*, 1 Cor. 3. 18. And ſo if he ſeems great, let him become little, that he may be great. By doing thoſe things which are little and deſpiſable in the Eye of the World, but great and highly eſteemed by God.

To lay in a greater Foundation by good Works, to abound in Chriſtian Graces and Vertues, is the way to receive a greater Reward in Heaven. It is commendable to be ambitious after that, ſo far as to put upon uſing the means to obtain. Accuſtoming himſelf to all Godly and Sober living, and to have reſpect unto all the Commandments, to lay out himſelf which way he ſhall moſt glorifie God, and do good to mankind. To improve time and every other Talent to the utmoſt, and ſuch like as may be learnt from Duty and Example in God's word. It is worth any Mans pains to aim at the higher Degrees of Glory, they being much beyond the greateſt trouble that can be endured here. To which he may be quickened by conſidering what Auſterities ſome have ſuffered to gain the Kingdom of God, how they have tumbled themſelves naked in the Winter Snow, rolled upon Thorns,

macerated

macerated the body with long faſtings, ſubmitted unto all the inconveniencies of wilfull poverty, and other hardſhips of Popiſh Superſtition. But theſe being additional ſervices to what he hath commanded(which many times make them neglected)and if that was not perfect, or as though *the God-head needed any thing*, Acts 17. 25. They will oblige and give him more *ex abundanti*. And therefore it is to be feared,they are not ſo very pleaſing in his ſight; even thus much we may judge of our ſelves, that if we ſhew unto thoſe under us the manner how they ſhall do ſuch things, we had rather they keep to that, then do it another way out of their own head; for as that argues ſelf-conceit in him, ſo a diſtruſt of our Wiſdom, in that they know better, and we cannot tell how we would be ſerved. If there be any ſuch thoughts in Mortal Men or Spiritual Pride, God knoweth; all their performances ſignifie nothing, and are ſo far from being acceptable,that they are an abomination unto him. *Ye ſhall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither ſhall you diminiſh ought from it, that ye may keep the Commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you*, Deut. 4. 2. Let him ſtrive to perform all them to the utmoſt, and if he doth ſo, letting alone thoſe of Humane Invention, he will be preferred before thoſe who have been very frank and diligent in doing thoſe things which *were never required at their hands*. 'Tis not multitude of outward Acts, but deep Iſa. 1. Humility of Mind which hath more acceptance with God; *He that ſhall humble himſelf, ſhall be exalted*, Mat. 23. 12. Who is of ſuch a diſpoſition as to be content with all his heart to be leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, if he may be there; and is well pleaſed with whatſoever God doth: If ſo, he cannot grudge at the good Man of the Houſe for doing what he will with his own,if he ſeeth another who was not ſo long in the Vineyard as himſelf, have an equal reward, ſeeing he hath what was promiſed. He cannot fume or rage to ſee the beloved Diſciple lie in his Saviours Boſome, or other favourites of Heaven admitted to a nearer Familiarity with Jeſus; He is not diſcontented or envious to behold *white Robes given them, who were ſlain for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony which they held*, Rev. 6. 9, 11. They all receive according to their Works, and if he had done the ſame things, he ſhould have had the ſame honour; The different Crowns are ſet upon their heads according to their deeds, and thoſe which were eminent for Sufferings or Chriſtian Graces (the chiefeſt

whereof

whereof is Humility) ſhall have a proportionable Reward.

So that, wouldſt thou be great in the Kingdom of Heaven? Learn of the good Patriarch to take up this reſolution, *The Lord ſhall be my God*, Gen. 28. 21. and to eſteem thy ſelf *not worthy of the leaſt of his Mercies*, Gen. 32. 10. Not to ſay from the Mouth only, but the ground of the Heart, *Lord I am not worthy to be fed with the crumbs that fall from thy Table*, and yet to be *as obedient Children, not faſhioning himſelf according to the former luſts in his ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of Converſation*, 1 Pet 1. 14, 15. To be contented for his finall portion with the leaſt mite of Gods bounty, and yet heartily labour in the mean while not to offend him in the leaſt point of his Law, to fulfil all Righteouſneſs, to do all that is commanded him, *and ſay he is an unprofitable Servant, he hath done that which was his duty to do.* He will indeed have an eye to the recompence of reward in General, for hereby he will better deſpiſe the Pleaſures of Sin, and not be weary of Well-doing; but of what ſort it ſhall be, whether above or below others, that he leaves to the alone diſpoſal of him; Such are the thoughts of the ſincere and humble Chriſtian, his expectation is not ſo very great, but that ſhall never be an hindrance, but further his advancement.

Luke 15. If he would be contented *to be made as one of the hired Servants*, yet he may have *the beſt Robe put on* by his moſt Bountiful and Gracious Father: *Before honour is humility*, Prov. 15. 33. By this way the great example thereof, as may aſtoniſh Men and Angels, came to be highly exalted, *Phil.* 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. And whoſo will follow his ſteps, being meek and lowly in heart, may in ſome meaſure be exalted likewiſe; You ſhall loſe nothing in the end, if you would at preſent loſe that juſt eſteem of your ſelves; for that the pride of the World calls ſo, which is but Fancy and Uſurpation. And whatſoever Station ye are in, the command reaches you; *Be ye of the ſame mind one towards another, Mind not high things but condeſcend to Men of low Eſtate*, Rom. 12. 16. This is the way to be had in Honour by God, and preferred even above thoſe who call it a Sordid and baſe Spirit.

Lowlineſs of mind, ſay they, is ſneaking, and doth not become a noble Birth and Extraction; But are theſe Men of a better Parentage then the *Son of God?* Is their Family better then his, who alſo according to the fleſh was deſcended from the *Antient Kings of* Judah? Are they wiſer then he? If they would acknowledge

ledge they are not, they muſt think the Apoſtle ſpoke both Reaſon and Sence, when he enforced this duty from his Example. *Let this mind be in you which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus, who being in the form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God, but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeneſs of Men.* If God be above Man, and yet humbled himſelf to be as the meaneſt, certainly it can be no diſgrace for him (who doth not differ from another but by an Eſtate, fine Clothes, aiery Titles of Honour) to ſhew that civility which is due to a fellow-Creature, partaker of the ſame fleſh and blood, and heir of the ſame comm[illegible] Salvation. *Behold God is Mighty and deſpiſeth not any, he is Mighty in Strength and Wiſdom*, Job. 36. 5. The Proudeſt two-footed Creature on Earth muſt not vie in Glory with him, and if he doth not abhor Men of low Eſtate, why ſhould they who are of the ſame mould, and ſtand in the very ſame Relation to him who is Lord over all? Why ſhould they trample over thoſe of their own kind? Love Horſes better, and look upon them with more ſcorn then if another ſort of Creatures? They are incenſed perhaps becauſe thoſe which ſeem ſo deſpicable in their Eyes, are of the ſame nature with themſelves; as if they were angry at themſelves becauſe they are but Men, or have ſuch an high value of themſelves, that they would have nothing look like them but what is Glorious and Lovely. How far will Pride proceed! Wherefore ſhould Earth and Aſhes be ſo lofty in its own conceit? Why ſhould he ſwell ſo much, who when his breath is gone, becomes one of the moſt loathſome Spectacles in the World? Why ſhould he ſhew himſelf more imperiouſly and diſdainfully over thoſe who are Fleſh of his Fleſh, and Bone of his Bone, then the Lord and Maker of them all, unto whom all the Nations of the Earth are as the drop of a Bucket? It was commanded the King (who is as much above Nobles as they above Beggers) *his heart ſhould not be lifted up above his Brethren*, Deut. 17. 20. Much leſs may they, who not only preſume to be exalted in their own conceits above, but account them more inferiour then brute Beaſts; although they be made in the Image of God, and are his workmanſhip as well as themſelves, and therefore in no ſort ſhould be deſpiſed. This temper, though ſo frequent in the World, it being one mark of Gentility to ſpeak contemptibly of the common People, and to make them keep their diſtance (another apt inſtance how contrary it is to

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true Religion) can neither be justified from Grace nor Reason. It is contrary to the mind of God, and his Son Jesus Christ; He was both a Pattern and Preacher of Humility; notwithstanding his High and Eternal Generation, he kept company with Publicans and Sinners, his constant Associates were poor Fishermen, he did one of the meanest Offices by washing their Feet, and did not slight or refuse any that came unto him of whatsoever condition. In the precepts he gave, he made no distinction some to be observed by Rich, and others by the Poor, but to extend unto all equally; *Take my Yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Mat. 11. 29. Take away Infidelity, and Men are almost Christians: Take away Pride, and they will become altogether so; for this accursed thing hinders from embracing his whole Doctrine. The heads of the People will not lose ought of their esteem; it is beneath them to learn Humility, Meekness, Long-suffering, Gentleness; if they will not, they may let them alone, their end is to be with them that *obey not the Gospel*.

Come to those that will, *Therefore if any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature; old things are passed away, all things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. He is to leave off the evil thoughts, Words and Actions of his Natural State, and to practise the contrary. Whereas in times past he had his conversation according to the course of the World, in Vanity of Mind, and was acted by his own humour; now it is to be as becometh the Gospel, according to the Examples of good Men, in Lowliness, and in every thing agreeable to the Will of God. In every Generation there were Persons of Eminency who served him, and they did nevertheless retain their Possessions and Servants, and other things according to their degree; so it is lawful to do the like. Anothers abuse doth not hinder, but the thing may be well used; In great Mens Houses their plentiful Provision of Meat and Drink, is perverted to Gluttony and Drunkenness, their Titles of Honour, outward Estate, and fine Clothes become Sinful through Pride; by having many Servants, they grow Imperious, and are too much lifted up; their several Sports and Recreations produce abundance of Idleness, and some in a literal sence *give the Childrens bread unto Dogs:* Giving that to them which belongs to the Poor; but all these ill consequences may be separated, and turned another way unto Good. Out of their abundance they may use Hospitality, feed the Hungry, cloath the Naked

Naked, and themſelves receive the Creatures with Thankfulneſs and Moderation; If well attired, they may be humble minded, and are ſo for diſtinction. God hath as well ordained the Silk-worm, as Sheep for Clothing. The duty of Maſters to Servants is laid down, and they are no where preſcribed to have ſuch an exact number; as many they have, they maintain ſo much the more, who otherwiſe might be deſtitute of convenient Live-lihood. Neither are Titles of Honour to be relinquiſhed, for the Scripture calls Men *Gods* and *Lords*: Nor doth it ſpeak particularly againſt Recreations, they may be laudably uſed to clear up the Spirits, that otherwiſe would be dull and cloudy. The danger of them is exceſs and hindrance of more important concerns; all things are Lawful, though ſubject through the corruption of Mans nature to be abuſed, and therefore muſt be continual circumſpection as to them. It is hard to ſit conſtantly at a full Table, and it ſhall not prove a ſnare to him; to have all variety of Pleaſant Liquor, and yet not pour down to exceſs; to taſte daily of ſweet things, and yet not be ſenſual minded; It is difficult to wear fine Cloathes, to be inured to outward Pomp and many Attendants, and yet not to be Proud; to be Rich, but not High-minded. The Goſpel hath ſhewed this way for ſuch to go to Heaven.

Greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the World; there is that which is a preſervative againſt all Temptation. *But grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. Be not content with that meaſure you have already; for the Lamp continually burning, requires freſh ſupplys of Oyl: There are appointed means to attain further degrees thereof, which whoever ſincerely makes uſe of, will be more confirmed in the good way, and againſt returning unto folly. *Look to your ſelves that we loſe not thoſe things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward*, 2 Joh. 8. Which may be by giving way again unto ſome paltry Luſts, or pitiful tranſitory Pleaſures; you have had the ſame already, you know how vain, ſudden and unſatisfying they are: if you entertain them again, you will receive a greater damnation, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21. *Ezek.* 18. 26. *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. All the irkſomneſs in Religion begins now to be over, and when thou art come into the way of Peace, wilt thou leave it? *O my People! What have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? Teſtify againſt me*, Mic. 6. 3. The wearineſs doth not lie in the duties

God hath required; for by doing them they are more easily done, but that is occasioned by hankering after old wayes, and our own unwillingness to good; but remove these, and *his Commandments are not grievous.*

The whole of our duty is comprised, *Tit.* 2. 12. Which whosoever actually doth, finds more ease and pleasure then can be had in the contrary; Besides that great difference in the verse following, *Looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* To partake fully thereof is the sum and comprehension of all happiness; and in the mean while the expectation thereof is exceedingly valuable, as now it is to have assurance of any future good.

But how is it with the wicked and ungodly? They cannot look beyond this life without strange Terrour and Amazement. When their Earthly enjoyments begin to fail, as in Sickness, Pain, outward Calamity; or if none of these happen, yet in declining age, how sad and miserable they are? They find no satisfaction in this World, and having provoked God, they dare not cast a thought upon the other; and yet they are continually going towards it, but for fear of being Tormented before their time, must not consider before hand. Their Case is like unto condemned Prisoners in a Dungeon, whose condition is wretched and life grievous, and yet wish the time long before dragged out to Execution; They know that must come, but are willing to put it out of their mind still; so these with all outward things cannot purchase unto themselves inward Peace. They are tired with, or cannot relish their sumptuous manner of living, which they could willingly part with if assured their Souls might become as nothing, and so ever remain. But there is a real fear it may be otherwise, and the sence of future judgment is not quite razed out of their minds with all they could ever do: so they endeavour to lengthen out an uneasie life, and put that afar off, which they dread as the inlet to misery. What doth it signifie to fly a little from that, which will at length overtake them? And how bitter will that be when it comes to grasp, the thoughts whereof are so astonishing? Such devices do manifest both Folly and Misery, for would it not be better for them to repent and bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance? and then all this would be avoided under which they groan.

For the good Man by obedience fulfills the condition of the promiſes, ſo they belong unto him; He is continually ſtoring up comfort againſt his dying day, and therefore not tormented with the apprehenſion thereof. It is not unpleaſant unto him to conſider of leaving his Fine Houſe and Lands, who hath a firm expectation of better things in Heaven; The faith and hope of this do very much Mitigate all the Miſeries he meets with here, that they are as none at all. It is generally granted, he is more happy then others in reference to another life, and the inconveniencies of this; but is he ſo as pertaining to preſent enjoyments? Yes aſſuredly, for our excellent Religion doth not take them away, but only preſcribe a more excellent manner of receiving them; It pares off what is inſipid and hurtful; it takes away nothing of the Man, but Folly, Falſhood, and Extravagancies; *Every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refuſed, if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is ſanctified by the Word of God and Prayer*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 4, 5. And to our ſelves it is rectified with Temperance and Moderation; for hereby a greater and more ſincere pleaſure is perceived, then the Glutton or Winebibbers can boaſt of. Sobriety gives a reliſh to every thing: Humility takes away Ambition and Inſatiable deſires, and brings Contentment and Reſt to the Soul. Charity delights by a Bleſſed Sympathy: He that diſtributes willingly, rejoyces with him that is partaker of the Alms. *It is more Bleſſed to give then to receive.*

As for his Family and Government over his Servants, there are Directions given, *Col.* 4. 1. *Eph.* 6. 9. 1 *Pet.* 2. 18. 1 *Tim.* 6. 2. *Tit.* 2. 9. *Job* 31. 13, 14, 15. *Pſal.* 101. 6, 7. Both obſerving their reſpective duties, they live more comfortably, then where neither do.

For Company, if he doth not more converſe with all ſorts then Neceſſity and common Civility oblige unto; yet he is not therefore deprived of the Pleaſures of Society: and what delight can any one endued with Goodneſs or Wiſdom take amongſt them, who find none within themſelves but in Wickedneſs and Folly? Who cannot be longer Merry, then whilſt Sinning. *Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*, Pſal. 119. 115. There is converſation enough to be had amongſt the Good, Prudent and Sober part of Mankind; He may have for Company, Godly and Learned Miniſters, who

must neceſſarily be acceptable to good Men, theſe being the two great Qualifications, which can render converſation truely uſeful and pleaſant.

The Scripture doth admoniſh of our demeanour towards them, *Exod.* 16. 7. *Deut.* 33. 10, 11. *Lam.* 4. 16. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. 1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2. 2 *Cor.* 5. 18, 19. They are Ambaſſadors of Chriſt, and we ſignifie the reſpect and honourable eſteem we have to any King, by ſhewing the like to his repreſentatives. They are the outward Inſtruments through which God ſends bleſſings to Mankind, who inſtruct and exhort them to lay hold of the greateſt Good: ſo unleſs they love not the Lord Jeſus, nor themſelves, or are horribly ingrateful, they muſt receive ſuch with honour and good will. Many exclaim againſt this kind of Doctrine, What be Prieſt-ridden? But who are thoſe, which take up ſuch a Proverb of reproach? *He that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me: and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me*, Luke 10. 16. Said our Lord to his Diſciples, from whom are derived *Paſtors and Teachers for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 11, 12. Let people have a care how they ſpeak contemptibly of this order of Men. Had we lived in the days of our Fathers, in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity; we might have ſeen Kings and Emperors ſhewed them that Civility, which now the meaneſt Laick will hardly vouchſafe. But let not thoſe who are Novices or corrupt in Life and Doctrine hence take occaſion to be lifted up with Pride (for ſo began the Uſurpation and Errours of the Roman Church) or expect any eſtimation unleſs like thoſe primitive Men they are enſamples to the Flock; who did not only Preach, but follow the ſteps of our Saviour in Humility, ſuch as ſpoken of, 2 *Cor.* 4. 5. And were not puffed up, but did thank God for the good will of the People, and were more induſtrious and faithful in their duty. Such even in this time, however placed in the Church, whether over a *Dioceſs* or ſingle *Pariſh*, are equal Company for thoſe of higheſt Rank: and whoſo feareth God, will eſteem them accordingly.

In the next place ſucceed his faithful People, *I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy Precepts*, Pſal. 119. 63. Said *David* the King. Much leſs ſhould it ſeem ſtrange and odd for thoſe of inferiour Quality to do the like. Why ſhould any one refuſe it? Either Pride of Heart, which muſt be taken

taken away, or Cuſtom of the World, but an evil Cuſtom is not to be complyed with. Why ſhould we over-look our Brethren, or ſeparate them from our Company? God admits the meaneſt to Communion with him, and will receive them into his Preſence; Are we better then he? They are to be admitted amongſt Angels and Archangels, amongſt all Saints where eſtrangedneſs and keeping of diſtance ſhall ceaſe: What is any (though of the moſt exalted Condition) to diſdain their Converſation in the mean while? If this mind be in him, he may be contemned by God for deſpiſing his Servants, who are the ſame with himſelf; for thoſe things which make the difference are without the Man, and were never given to thruſt others far from him. If he thinks himſelf too good for their Company on Earth, how knoweth he but God may not think him good enough for their Company in Heaven? And then they will take up this Saying: Lo this is the Man that ſlighted us, would not come near us, we forſooth were not worthy of him; but ſee what his Pride is come unto, God hath rejected him, now he would be with us if he might, *The Pride of thy Heart hath deceived thee.* Obad. 3. To prevent this Danger, there is for imitation the Reſolution of the Royal Pſalmiſt, *To the Saints that are in the Earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight*, Pſal. 16. 3. *Mine eyes ſhall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me*, Pſal. 101. 6. The Scoffing World cry out ſuch an one to be of a low Spirit for keeping mean Company, who doth aim at as great things as they do, and goes as right a way to accompliſh them. It will be diſcerned who is wiſe, and who is not; and even now they receive a mutual delight and ſatisfaction, equivalent to the greateſt Jollity. But to anſwer others: Who keeps the meaneſt Company? He that Converſes with Hawks, Hounds, and hath Dogs to feed at his Table? Or who Aſſociates with thoſe of the ſame likeneſs with himſelf, who are equally made in the image of God? Is not a rational Creature better then brute Beaſts? If thou ſayeſt not, thou art a *Turk*, and diſparageſt thy ſelf, beſides him, who hath created us Patterns of his own Eternity. But they are more lovely, who have thoſe *Beauties of Holineſs*, thoſe Divine impreſſions of goodneſs within them; which are diſcerned by the ſpiritual Eye, and more eſteemed of then the utmoſt Bodily perfection. They have that *Righteouſneſs which endureth for ever*, and therefore to be preferred before thoſe pompous Titles of worth, which ſhortly

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ſhall fail, and that Honour which is to be laid in the Duſt. *They are Children and Heirs of God, and Joynt-Heirs with Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 17. and if we believe theſe Relations do exceed thoſe of the World, it can be no more a Diſparagement to Converſe with them, then the Son and Heir of a Nobleman, though as yet he hath not one Farthing of his Fathers Demeſnes. *By this we know that we love the Children of God, when we love God and keep his Commandments*, 1 John 5. 2. And ſo again, if we love God, that will be manifeſted towards his *Choſen Ones, his Sons, his Elect, his Servants*, and whom he vouchſafes to ſtile by all Expreſſions of kindneſs. *We know that we have paſſed from Death to Life, becauſe we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14. Where is love, there an Union is deſired with the object beloved, and accordingly will be had. Let none diſſemble, God knoweth the Heart, and for what Reaſon it is, if any neglects his Duty in this particular. If he deſpiſe the Poor and low Eſtate of faithful People, *What ſhall he do, when God riſeth up? And when he viſiteth, what ſhall he anſwer him?* Job 31. 14. Let him ſhew that he doth not, by a Chriſtian Converſation with them; let him be gentle, eaſie to be entreated, uſe Hoſpitality without grudging, ſpeak Friendly as one Man talketh to another without ſcornful or ruff Language. And let them be advertiſed from, *Iſa.* 3. 5. *Gal.* 2. 2. not to abuſe or make an occaſion of Contempt anothers Humility and Courteouſneſs; for we are in no wiſe to confound the diſtinction God hath made amongſt mankind.

The Bleſſing of the Lord it maketh rich, and addeth no Sorrow with it, Prov. 10. 22. ſo in his Word he hath preſcribed a moſt excellent way for their Station and Circumſtances, by which they are freed from thoſe Miſeries, others of like Condition are ſubject unto: and then they enjoy the Comforts here, in a much better way. The Service of God, doing good to their Countrey, Meditation and Reading, the Affairs of humane Life, thoſe moderate aud innocent Delights, do take off from the Irkſomeneſs and Tediouſneſs of time; ſo they live happily and paſs through here with more Reſt and Quietneſs, then others who take no Care what ſhall become of them.

Thus ſaith the Lord, Let not the wiſe man Glory in his Wiſdom, neither let the mighty man Glory in his might; but let him that Glorieth, Glory in this that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, Jer. 9. 23, 24. 'Tis not noble Birth and Extraction, but that Relation which the Almighty

mighty vouchſafes to have towards mankind, which makes them truly Honourable. *Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us*? Mal. 2. 10. Nay, have we not the ſame Father after the Fleſh? Are we not all the Sons of a Gardiner? In the moſt Ancient and illuſtrious Family, if the ſeveral mean deſcents could be traced up, thoſe Anceſtors would be found out whereof none hath Reaſon to be proud of: What the Prophet ſaith, *Ezek.* 16. 3, 4, 5, 6. is ſufficient to abaſe any one concerning his Original, and ſhould be an inducement not to truſt in his own, but *to ſeek that Honour which cometh from God only*, *John* 5. 44. His Providence hath ordered the ſeveral diſtinctions in the World, and hath placed them in ſeveral Seats to work out their own Salvation. It is no diminiſhing, but encreaſe of preſent Happineſs to comply with the Good will of God. *Wealth and Riches ſhall be in his Houſe*, Pſal. 112. 3. they are already; but there is ſomewhat better nearer within, *The Satisfaction of a good Conſcience*. He is Clothed well, ſuffers neither Hunger nor Thirſt, Cold nor Nakedneſs. God hath given him both ſpiritual and temporal Bleſſings. By the firſt he doth Love and Honour his Great Benefactor: And he doth not ſet his Heart upon the things that are ſeen (for that is the great danger of Worldly abundance) but uſes them to Miniſter only unto his Pilgrimage: Being aſſured, that though theſe are good, yet God hath provided better things, that when this Happineſs (which is imperfect, and for a time) is to be determined, he is to arrive at that which is perfect, and to endure throughout all Ages. When ſuch an one is to be taken away from his fine Habitation, Eſtate, Wife, Children, Servants, and all that is eſteemed dear amongſt Men; in the ſight of the unbelieving World he may ſeem to die, and his Departure be taken for Loſs and Miſery: Whereas *he ſhall enter into Peace: They ſhall reſt in their Beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs*, Iſa. 57. 2. Then only his true and uninterrupted Felicity begins, which ſhall never end. Wouldſt thou be in this Mans Condition? *Go thou, and do likewiſe.*

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the COMMON PEOPLE.

It is the Duty of all to be in ſome Calling: An Exhortation to ſerve God: Againſt Ignorance, and Unbelief: Some Conſiderations of living in the World, and further drawn from the four laſt things. Of different Communions: Of Deceits. A Deſcription of the Wicked and Godly in this World.

OF this Order they are reputed in the World, who do not live of their own, but follow ſome Trade or Employment. And here it may not be improper to ſpeak ſomewhat concerning that, and the Obligation all lye under to it.

As ſoon as God created Man, he was appointed ſome work to do, even in his beſt Eſtate of innocency. But then was Labour without Sorrow and Tireſomeneſs, for it was after added, *Gen.* 3. 17, 19. *In Sorrow ſhalt thou eat all the days of thy Life, in the ſweat of thy Face ſhalt thou eat Bread.* This was pronounced on him for us all, for all have ſinned in him, and who can plead Freedom from it? If we expect the Bleſſing of the ſecond *Adam*, it is meet we ſhould ſubmit to the Condition of the firſt: Neither doth that Diſpenſation wherewith Chriſt hath made us Free, exempt herein; for one ſaith, who knew the utmoſt extent of it. *Thoſe walk diſorderly which work not at all. Now them that are ſuch, we Command, and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work and eat their own Bread,* 2 Theſ. 3. 11, 12. Intimating that it was not properly their own, unleſs they did work for it. Not that it is neceſſary for all to take manual Employments upon them, for

for ſome have not ſtrength of Body, and their Education is another way; but yet may do as much good, and be ſerviceable to their Countrey, as thoſe who do reap and ſow. The Promiſe of eternal Life is to keeping the Commandments, whereof the ſecond is, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*; which obliges to do thoſe ſeveral good and neceſſary Offices for him, which we would have done for our ſelves. But how agrees herewith that proud and ſelfiſh Spirit, who would have others do any thing for him? the Poor muſt dung his Ground, Cut his Corn, and be ſerviceable unto him, but he will not contribute towards their good in ſo large a manner as he expects they ſhould do for his. He ſpeaks diſdainfully and contemptuouſly of thoſe who drudge and ſlave for a Livelihood, and bleſſes himſelf, becauſe he is not forced to an Employment for Bread; for indeed few do take any upon them, unleſs by conſtraint, or greedy Deſires after encreaſe; but who doth ſo only out of Conſcience towards God? *The heads thereof judge for Reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for hire*, Mic. 3. 11. The fault is in making that the ultimate end, when they would not do ſo much unleſs for the Profits and Maintenance belonging to ſuch Offices, and theſe are principally intended. To be in ſome Calling is our Duty, and alſo it frees from the Miſery and Sin of idleneſs. We have reſtleſs and buſie Spirits, which muſt be Converſant about ſomething: Both the Faculties of mind and Members of Body were deſigned for Proper Action, they are uneaſie when not employed. Such a kind of Life is more wretched and irkſome, then the meaneſt Labour and working with the hands. Neh. 5. 15. 18.

Behold this was the iniquity of thy Siſter Sodom: *Pride, fulneſs of Bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her, and in her Daughters, neither did ſhe ſtrengthen the hand of the Poor and Needy*, Ezek. 16. 49. Theſe three go together in too many Men and Women of this Nation, and have Connexion: The laſt is the natural reſult of the two former, for through haughtineſs of mind and Sloth, which is the conſequent of Exceſs, comes that Contempt and neglect of honeſt Callings. When the Wiſdom of God hath ordered Man to work and labour, they Fancy themſelves too good for it. So they either think themſelves to be ſomewhat above Men, or that to be unbecoming them. But they ſhould have a great Care how they deſpiſe Divine Ordinances, becauſe of what is written, *Numb.* 15. 30, 31. *Heb.* 10. 28. Pſal. 104. 23, 24.

The Son of God came into the World not to be Miniſtred unto, but to Miniſter. But ſome contrariwiſe think, others ought to do nothing, but ſerve and cringe unto them: For all their high Imaginations, they are but Men; be they never ſo Selfiſh, they ſtand in need of others: ſo it is both Conſcience and Reaſon they ſhould do as they would be done by, and be alike uſeful unto others. But the nice and delicate Souls do not love Trouble or Pains; if they would throughly rouze themſelves from Lethargy, they would find more delight then ever they did in the unactive manner of Life: The being accuſtomed to buſineſs or bodily Labour makes it Pleaſant, and takes off from the Irkſomeneſs of Life. It ſeems ſtrange that thoſe who greedily hunt after Happineſs, ſhould yet give way to Idleneſs; which is a Torment and Vexation to the Soul. Is it becauſe they have more time to enjoy Pleaſures? When they are had continually, they ceaſe to be ſuch. Intermingle Work with Play, and both would be delightful; but if one followed only the latter, it is more Tireſome then to go all day long to Plough and Cart. It is not only a Matter of temporal Conveniency, but is neceſſary in order to eternal Reſt and Happineſs. So it ſtands as to the means of obtaining it, and prevention of the hindrances, which are Temptation and Sin. Let the Devil never find thee idle (was the good Advice of one) for then he cannot tempt thee. At times of leiſure he is moſt buſie, ſuggeſting Pride and ſpiritual Wickedneſs, all things to beguile and loſe ſomewhat of our Reward. In that time alſo the Solicitations of the World preſent themſelves, and we Parley with them. But the worſt of all is from within: *The heart which is deſperately wicked*, when it hath no outward Object to fix on, that Corruption lurking there begins to ſtir. It will run after Theft, Covetouſneſs, Luſt, and all manner of Evil; which breaks forth into iniquity and diſobedience. It may be obſerved of ſeveral, who are rightly diſpoſed to the ways of Good, but they have nothing to do, and not knowing how to ſpend their time, reſort to the Pleaſures of Sin and idle Company; which either choak, or ſtop the growth of *the Good Seed* So mightily hath idleneſs contributed to Satans Kingdom, and the Deſtruction of Souls; which ſhould have been prevented by honeſt Labour and Employment.

But ſome make an Excuſe from that, becauſe they would have more leiſure for Religion; whereas that if uſed aright doth not thruſt out, but help towards it. They were both ordained to ſtand together, and Conſiſtent with each other; for the ſame God appointed all. The common miſtake is of confining the whole to one part, as placing all in Acts of Godlineſs and Devotion, which is but one third; and therefore not to ſhut out from the other Duties: *I have not cauſed thee to ſerve with an Offering, nor wearied thee with incenſe*, Iſa. 43.23. 'Tis not required of any one to tire his Soul with long Prayers, and our Saviour Chriſt remarks of the *Heathen, who think they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking*, Mat. 6.7. The Sacrifices were offered up under the Law *every Morning and Evening*, but not the whole Day; except the Sabbath-day, for which was ordered *a double and continual burnt Offering*, Numb. 28. 9, 10. Thereby giving to ſignifie, that the day which is even now ſet apart for the immediate Service of God, ſhould be wholly ſpent in ſacred Duties. *Six days ſhalt thou Labour, and do all that thou haſt to do.* God could have provided things without our Labour, if his Wiſdom had thought fit; but having ordained that, a Man who is faithful and dili- Col. 3.24.
gent therein, ſerves him as acceptably at that time, as in holy things at another: Nothing hinders, but that in the midſt of our Work there may be a conſtant Sence of God over our mind, and a fixed purpoſe not to offend in any thing: *So is the Will of God that none ſhould live unto himſelf, but unto him, who hath called us in one hope of our Calling*, and alſo ſome manner of Life, that we may get neceſſaries for our Being here: And if we have them already; yet to *work with our hands to give to him that needeth*, Eph. 4.28. If we have that alſo, yet ſtill we are to be beneficial unto others.

Not one of a thouſand, who is in a Trade or Employment, neglects that for the buſineſs of Religion: and who is in none, not this, but ſomething elſe is the real Cauſe. Men generally run to the other extream, and will not allow that time they might conveniently for the Service of God. If one ſhould employ an hour or two more then ordinary in a Week, he would be more accuſed of negligence, then who conſumes thrice the time in Drinking-houſes, or Fruitleſs Recreations; ſo apt are we to grudge in our ſelves every minute more then needs muſt. Who hears the word Preached, or goes to publick Prayers on Week-

Acts 25.7. days, doth Act as one that believeth the Gospel and lives accordingly. *David* and *Daniel* were both engaged in much Worldly business and matters of State, yet we read what they did, *Psal.* 55.17. *Psal.* 119. 164. *Dan.* 6.10. and any one now may do the like, and will lose nothing by it. *The Blessing of the Lord maketh rich*, which is sought for, and had by Prayer. So that time, which others think lost, may be gainful as to the present; but most certainly it is to the future. We have known several instances of those, who through Sin or Carelesness have came to Poverty, but never any by thus doing. That of the Apostle is observable as if he had foreseen what People would make a Pretence to neglect the one, or thrust out the other; and therefore he joyns them all in one Verse as very Consistent, *Not slothful in Business, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord*, Rom. 12.11.

If one did behold all the Transactions and Labour under the Sun, how those several Stations and Employments are appointed unto Men: Every one conduces to the benefit of the whole, and hath Connexion one to another, he ought to Praise him who ruleth over all. *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in Wisdom hast thou made them all, the Earth is full of thy Riches*, Psal. 104. 24. In another kind it is shewed in things of an higher Nature. It is all done by the *same God which worketh all in all*, and those several gifts are for every one *to profit withal*; which should be once more considered by the useless Men of the World. Every single Tradesman and Labourer doth further the Need and Delight of mankind; even those which seem to be meanest and less honourable, do necessarily conduce towards it, as Husbandry. The several Employments in the World tend to our Good, in the different Capacities of Mind, Body and Estate. None is to be despised, for we have all our Treasure in Earthen Vessels, and the lower kinds of Labour are fitted to the Sustenance and Well-being of them: So they likewise do contribute to the benefit of our better part. He that is in the most worthy Station, stands in need of the unworthy, as well as this Man doth of him. *The whole Body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that, which every joynt supplieth according to the effectual Working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body, unto the edifying of it self in Love*, Eph. 4.16. Let there be no strife which is most beneficial to the whole, for all are so; though some must be above others, or otherwise there would be a Schism in the Body. The

1 Cor. 12.

higher

higher ſort of Employments have proportionable ſorrow and wearineſs going along with them, eſpecially ſuch as require plodding and contrivance; Whereas it is not ſo in handicrafts, for when the Art is once learned, there is no vexation or doubt of mind to work in it. The Son of God is ſuppoſed to have been a *Carpenter*, Mark 6. 3. And to have laboured in that till thirty Years of Age; and alſo the *Apoſtle* of the *Gentiles* did work in the Occupation of a Tent maker, both which are reputed mean Trades; yet they having been thus honoured, none hath reaſon to be aſhamed of his of alike kind. Eyes were given to ſee, Ears to hear, and alſo hands to work withall; ſo it can be no diſparagement to employ them to that for which they were deſigned. Thoſe who would account it ſo, and make a mock of the labour of the Poor, may be deſpiſed by their great Maſter; when thoſe who have been uſed to hardſhip and diligence in the World, may be admitted into the Reſt that remaineth for the people of God. They are in the ready road to Heaven, if to their Pains they will add Godlineſs, Righteouſneſs and Sobriety; if they do theſe things, they ſhall never fail: The temptations of the World, Fleſh and Devil will not ſo eaſily prevail againſt them, whoſe time is taken up with honeſt labour; The promiſes are more peculiar to them, *Mat.* 11. 5. *Luk.* 6. 20. *Jam.* 2. 5. *1 Cor.* 1. 27. Our Lord choſe for his Diſciples none of the learned *Phariſees*, or *Rabbins*, but Fiſhermen, and of other mean Occupations; he called them at that very time, *As* Levi *when he was ſitting at the receit of cuſtom*, Luke 5. 27. Simon Peter *and* Andrew *his Brother, as they were caſting a Net into the Sea. And going on from thence, he ſaw two other Brethren*, James *the Son of* Zebedee, *and* John *his Brother in a Ship with* Zebedee, *their Father mending their Nets, and he called them*, *Mat.* 4. 18, 21. The good News of his coming into the World, was firſt told to the *Shepherds abiding in the Field, and keeping watch over their flock by Night*, Luke 2. 8. So God appeared to *Moſes*, Exod. 3. 1, 2. *To* Gideon *as he was threſhing*, Judg. 6. 11, 12. Thus acceptable it is unto him when Men abide, and are diligent in their calling; he doth not eſteem them the leſs, but rather chooſes them for the meanneſs thereof. In his Holy Word there are many particular alluſions to the ſeveral Trades in the World, as the *Husbandman*, *Carpenter*, *Smith*, *Potter*, *Shepherd*, and ſuch like; they are upon ſuch ſure grounds of obtaining a future

Happineſs.

Happineſs, and there is ſo much reaſon theſe ſhould ſeek diligently after it, that it would be an admiration if any ſhould miſs thereof.

Yet alas! God is not known amongſt them all, no, nor the greateſt part; though they are more encouraged as having the promiſes, of which ſort was Chriſt himſelf and the Apoſtles. It is exceedingly to be pityed, that the Word of God upon them alſo ſhould have no more effect; *Hearken my beloved Brethren, Hath not God choſen the poor of this World, rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promiſed to them that love him?* Jam. 2. 5. Why therefore will you not alſo chooſe him to be your God? Some have done ſo, but why will you not all? Indeed one would imagine every ſingle Soul ſhould do ſo, unleſs he did caſt his eyes out into the World; and then he might ſee Satan hath a Kingdom among theſe equally as the great ones of the Earth. Wickedneſs is not confined to high Places, nor inhabiteth only in fine Houſes; but hath ſpread among thoſe of low Eſtate, and crept into the ſmalleſt Cottages. Oppreſſion, Bribery, and Injuſtice are in great Employments; Couſenage, Lying, and all manner of deceit do accompany every inferior Trade: there is a knaviſh part, a Myſtery of iniquity interwoven into it, and is peculiar to each profeſſion. There is a general failure of Truth and Juſtice from among us; *I have ſeen violence and ſtrife in the City, miſchief alſo and ſorrow are in the midſt of it, deceit and guile depart not from her ſtreets*, Pſal. 55. 9, 10. In the Country is over-reaching one another, each Man trys to impoſe upon his Neighbour; the hireling loyters and is regligent in his Maſters buſineſs. The poor in time of leaſing will break the Commandment for a morſel of bread and handful of barley, if they have opportunity of taking it from the heap and not be diſcovered: They are every where corrupt in their dealings, there is hardly one that doth juſtly. They will exclaim againſt the Debauchery of the Rich, and perhaps out of an ill humour, becauſe themſelves are reſtrained from ſinning after the ſame manner through want; but they will equal them in another kind by Diſhoneſty, Falſhood, and Murmuring: and the ſame Spirit of diſobedience would lead them to commit the ſame ſins (they now ſpeak againſt) if they had where-withal. The Word of God is gone forth againſt all manner of Sin and Iniquity, and it will ſignifie nothing at his Judgment, to ſay, you did not commit ſuch and

and ſuch, if you did of another ſort; Ignorance, contempt of and repining againſt God, Slandering, Lying, and Theft are as damnable as Whoredom, Drunkenneſs, or Gluttony. As the rich are more liable to the enticement of theſe, ſo are you of the others: They are more eaſily beſet by the pleaſures, you by the profits of this World *Both are in Temptation, that the trial of your Faith and Obedience may be had*; there is no neceſſity for either of you to fall, the one may be temperate even in the midſt of all his abundance; the other may be honeſt, and yet have ſufficient for Life and Godlineſs. God hath given the rich great advantages to work out his own Salvation, ſo he is in alike danger of miſcarrying; the poor hath not quite ſo great furtherances, but is in leſs danger. This comes to be through knowledge and ignorance, the former know more; the other not having ſuch means, are commonly *poor and fooliſh, for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the Judgment of their God.* Jer. 5. 4.

Ignorance hath, and doth yet too much abound in our Land; eſpecially amongſt the lower ſort: The cauſes whereof hath been the covetouſneſs or poverty of Parents; who either would not, or were not able to put them to School, and then it ſhould be ſupplyed by the charity of others: Or elſe their own perverſe will, who hated knowledge and deſpiſed inſtruction out of a wicked mind, becauſe they think that if once they knew the will of God, they are to do it; which they care not for, and therefore will not ſeek to underſtand it, vainly hoping hereby to be excuſed from obeying: Or thirdly, the fault and negligence of Paſtors and Teachers, who were for doing no more then juſt to entitle them to their Tythes. *They are all ignorant, they are all dumb Dogs, they cannot Bark, ſleeping, lying down, loving to ſlumber, they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter,* Iſa. 56. 10, 11. And becauſe this might have been had with leſs, they have not been diligent and earneſt to make people throughly underſtand which be the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God. If ſuch hindrances were removed, all the inhabitants of this Nation might know the Lord from the leaſt unto the greateſt. What could God do more, then to give us the Law and the Teſtimony, and the Light that is in them? To command that his Goſpel be Preached to every Creature, wherein is ſo plain a diſcovery of Himſelf, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt; that none who either hears or reads Of Ignorance.

reads can be ignorant, let him have never ſo mean a Capacity, unleſs he is a meer natural Ideot, of whom more is not required then is given. There is an appointed Order of Men, who are to be *Guides of the Blind, a Light of them which are in Darkneſs, an Inſtructer of the Fooliſh, a Teacher of Babes*, Rom. 2. 19, 20. But if they inſtead of ſpeaking to Edification and ſound Doctrine, will utter *dark Speeches* or *uſeleſs Notions*; if the people will come into the Aſſembly, but not hearken to what is ſaid, or willingly forget, if thoſe will not *ſearch the Scriptures* when they are commanded ſo to do; God doth move and incline, but forces none: *They know not, neither will they underſtand, they walk on in Darkneſs*, Pſal. 82. 5. Come to die like brute Beaſts, and then be reſerved (Hear ye all this, and tremble) until *the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God*, 2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8. You think to go Heaven, becauſe you live a poor laborious life, but how can you expect that? when Truth it ſelf hath ſaid, *This is life Life Eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*, Joh. 17. 3, Think not this knowledge too excellent for you to attain unto it, What ſhould hinder? If you can read, you will underſtand; and then you hear the Word Preached every Lords day, you may enquire of Chriſtian Brethren and Friends; ſo having theſe advantages, if thou canſt not read, thou mayeſt believe, and do thy duty, if thou haſt in ſincerity a mind to do it. Many people talk of ignorance, by which they will defend their ungodly manner of living, which in truth is a further degree of Provocation, becauſe they began that firſt with not *deſiring the knowledge of Gods ways*. Thoſe times are long ſince paſſed, when he *winked at Ignorance*, Acts 17. 30. And it cannot be now pretended under the Goſpel, eſpecially where (bleſſed be God) every one hath or may have the Book of ſaving Knowledge. The moſt unlearned Soul, who can neither write nor read, hath other helps to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth; for God hath appointed means to make it known unto Men. In this Place and Generation none can be ignorant, but he who is willingly ignorant, if rightly examined, of perverſe mind and ſet purpoſe, as will more appear in that day when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be judged. This is one of thoſe deceits, by which Satan works in the minds of Men and Women, and *holds them Captive at his Will*. He whiſpers that they are ſafe enough as long

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as they do not know Gods Commandments, and the ſilly People are willing to have it ſo; they will ſooner give credit to him who was a liar from the beginning, and would deceive them, then the Prophet of the Lord, who beſt knew his Will and fore-warn'd them not to fall under his ſore diſpleaſure. *It is a people of no underſtanding: therefore he that made them, will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour*, Iſa. 27. 11. As ſure as this is Gods Word, ſuch will neither be excuſed from puniſhment, nor ever come to Salvation, unleſs they both know the things of God, and alſo do them.

As Ignorance is too much in our Coaſts, ſo likewiſe is Unbelief; both which are equally found among the lower ſort of Mankind. Hence they know no other ends of life then food, raiment, ſleeping, and riſing up early to take pains; all their care is what they ſhall eat, and where-withal to be cloathed, and how to get Money for neceſſary things. They know no other reaſon of their coming into the World, and are apt to murmur at the hardneſs of their condition; the very beaſts do put them in mind of their duty, and ſilently upbraid them with the negligence thereof. *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib, but they do not know*, Although there is more reaſon they ſhould know God, for he is more gracious unto them, then themſelves are to the dumb Creatures; They underſtand leſs of the moſt Excellent and Glorious Being above, then brutes do of them: For the Cattle look unto him that bringeth them fodder; but they look not unto him *who giveth them their Meat in due ſeaſon, Who maketh Graſs to grow upon Mountains, and Herb for the uſe of Man; Who cauſeth the Seed to be proſperous, and the ground to give her increaſe.* When darkneſs overſpread the whole Earth, *he left himſelf not without Witneſs in that he did good, and gave us rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons, filling our Souls with food and gladneſs*, Acts 14. 17. Theſe things our eyes ſee, our han's handle, we taſte them with our Mouth, we reap the fruit and enjoy it, yet are unmindful and conſider not from whence it firſt comes. Of Unbelief.

It may be alledged; Did we with our very eyes ſo clearly ſee the Giver of all theſe good things, as other Creatures do us when we carry them food, we ſhould be ten thouſand degrees worſe, if we did not know him.

To which it is answered; God is a Spirit, and cannot be seen with bodily eyes. He is so exceeding Glorious, that in this frail and infirm state *no Man can see him and live*, Exod. 33. 20. But yet *the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made*, Rom. 1. 20. We must by our very reason conclude, it was some one who made all these things, and he is God. Further he hath ordered, that *We walk by Faith, and not by Sight*, 2 Cor. 5. 7. So that if he should make a clearer manifestation of himself, there would be no faith at all, and then no Trial of Obedience; for would any one dare sin against him, if he saw him face to face with his Bow bent, and Sword drawn ready to take Vengeance on him? It hath pleased the Lord to put us here, *to prove us, to know what is in our hearts, whether we will keep his Commandments or no.* We are far
Deut. 8. 2. off from the habitation of his holiness, but he filleth Heaven and Earth with his presence; *And hath made us to dwell here, and hath determined the bounds of our habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, though he be not far from every one of us, for in him we live, and move, and have our being*, Acts 17. 27, 28. In the works of Creation and Providence he hath plainly discovered himself, besides that evident revelation he hath made in Scripture. Considering he hath decreed we should live by Faith; What else could be done to beget in us a more *full assurance of Faith*? The works of Creation are long since past, for they were finished in the first six days; but those of Providence still endure; *Upholding all things by the Word of his Power*, Heb. 1. 3. Those without life are kept up by his Mighty hand; *Every plant in the Field* (was made) *before it was in the Earth, and every Herb of the Field before it grew*, Gen. 2. 5. But now is nourished and springs up from the Earth, which he hath ordained to Minister food to sensible things; so all proceeds from him. There are some who would fain any way rob God of the honour due unto his Name, and therefore will ascribe these things to Nature and second Causes; but to stop their Mouth (who go under the name of Christians) with the word of an Heathen. What else is Nature but God himself, and the
Sen. lib. 4. cap. 7. de Benef. Divine Reason interwoven into all its parts? Saith *Seneca*, 'Tis God who ruleth over all, and hath given to every thing its Nature, and ordered them to Act accordingly. Thus he hath endued the Earth with vertue to bear Seed and Fruit; accordingly being

being tilled by the labour and induſtry of Man, it doth; in the mean while he is not to Dig and Root there, ſeeing no further, but to look up to that God who hath given the ground power to bring forth theſe things. Thoſe unbelievers who cry up ſo much for ſecond cauſes, do unawares acknowledge a firſt, for otherwiſe how could there be a ſecond? And this firſt cauſe is God, by whom, from whom, and for whom are all things. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory and Honour, and Power, for thou haſt created all things and for thy pleaſure, they are and were created*, Rev. 4. 11. Hence thou mayeſt as eaſily be known by reaſonable Creatures, ſo far as to glorifie thee as God, as themſelves are known *by Horſe and Mule which have no underſtanding.* Iſa. 17. 7.

No Man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſome of the Father, he hath declared him, John 1. 18. The Word clothed in fleſh, and conveyed to us by Ink and Paper, and ingraven in Tables of the Heart hath made him more known unto us. The truth of all Jeſus did and ſaid, is confirmed by Miracles, Wonders, and Signs and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt; Acts 2. 22. and hath ſtood out againſt all the Malice of Men or Devils, armed with nothing but its naked ſimplicity and reality; Which all the Gentile World were not able to ſuppreſs, though they did try with their utmoſt skill and might; Which had no aid from the World, yet obtained the victory over it: Which ſtill increaſed, though who entertained it got nothing at preſent but cruel Mockings and Scourgings; Moreover Bonds and Impriſonments, nay, further the moſt horrid and Tormenting Deaths that was poſſible for Fleſh and Blood to ſuffer; yet through Faith hereof endured them all with more Conſtancy and Reſolution, then was ever ſeen in the Mightieſt Men of Valour. If theſe and ſeveral other Arguments were duly conſidered and weighed, it would be the greateſt wonder, that for all theſe *any yet ſhould not believe*; So Mark. 6. 6. more then abundantly hath God provided for Mankind, to bring them to Heaven and Happineſs.

Heb. 2. 4.

But as if all this were nothing worth, Men will not know or not believe what he hath told unto them; otherwiſe they would be never ſo regardleſs thereof. When they reverence their Land-lord, but do not mind *the great Lord of Heaven and Earth*; When they earneſtly court the favour of a Mortal Man, and think themſelves never ſufficiently diligent in getting Money, but are not careful after thoſe things above; Do they verily *believe God is*,

and that he is a Rewarder of them, who diligently ſeek him? When they like Beaſts are only for the preſent things before them, but negligent of what ſhall be hereafter, and never caſt an eye towards the things that are not ſeen; certainly theſe do not *live by Faith*: Whoſe underſtanding is waxed groſs, that can conceive of nothing but what may be felt or ſeen; Who can reliſh nothing, but what goes between the Teeth; theſe do not live the common lives of Men, being led by ſence and not reaſon. It is an amazing thing to conſider of the ſtupidity and dulneſs of thoſe of lower degree, as concerning their Spiritual State and Condition. 'Tis not ſo much down right Atheiſm and Unbelief, but a dead Faith which is in them: It is not equal to that of Devils, *for they believe and tremble*; but this hath no ſuch effect upon them. They fancy there may be ſuch a thing as Heaven, they are not ſure to the contrary; They look upon it as a place of reſerve, where they would be when they can no longer abide in the World, it is appointed for the poor and needy; ſo it will receive them whether they take any care or no. Such thoughts as theſe may enter into their minds, for notwithſtanding they may ſtill go on in their courſe; But were they really perſwaded, there are two places for all to go into after this life, *Heaven* and *Hell*: And how it is ſet down in Scripture what is to be done to obtain entrance into the one, and avoid the other. Did they really think what an happineſs the one is, much greater then Riches and all Pleaſures in this World; and the other to be a worſe Torment then any Pain or Sickneſs now is: they would as willingly go to Church, and be as devout to ſet them forward in the way to Heaven; as now they go to Fairs and Markets, and are intent upon their Buſineſs to get ſome ſmall gain: On the other hand, they would take as much care to flee from the Wrath to come, as now they do to keep themſelves in health and prevent the beginnings of a bodily Diſtemper. They would labour as earneſtly for the exceeding great reward God hath prepared for them that keep his Commandments, as now they do for a little Money from another Man. They would act in the very ſame manner to obtain the things pertaining to his Kingdom, as now they do for the things of the Earth.

It is the property of Faith *to make things which are not ſeen, to be as if they were ſeen*; and though were they both of the ſame value, it could not be expected we ſhould ſo willingly run after what we have

have never ſeen, as after that which is moſt certain, and our Eyes ſee: Yet there being ſuch an exceeding odds and worth in the things that are to be believed over the things that are now ſeen, this turns the Scales and make them hang even, yea and weigh down the things of Senſe. If we have the full aſſurance of Faith, that upon doing ſuch things we ſhall receive an everlaſting Kingdom, we ſhould no more grudge to do them, then we do now a days work upon anothers Promiſe of ſo much for our Pains. We may as reaſonably truſt for what he hath promiſed, as we do the Word of a ſinful Man when we Labour for him. And there being ſuch a vaſt difference between what the Almighty will vouchſafe to beſtow upon us (worthy of God to give, and as much as a Creature can receive) over what we can impart to another; then ſurely there is as much reaſon (I ſay infinitely more) why we ſhould ſerve God, as do the like for another. Would we be as diligent to be *made Kings and Prieſts unto God*, Rev. 1.6. as now we are to be Servants unto great Men; endeavour as much to get *an eternal Crown of Glory*, as now for thoſe *Corruptible things of Gold and Silver*; Labour as earneſtly after the great things of Eternity, as is now done for the little things of Time, we ſhould certainly come to poſſeſs them. Neither can the World condemn us of Folly, for we Act according to the ſame meaſure as themſelves, who are accounted *Wiſe in their Generation*. If we do indeed ſettle it in our Hearts, that theſe things are; we ſhould be as careful and induſtrious to have them as others are of the things here; and if ſo, *our Labour would not be in vain*. But what a faithleſs and ſtubborn Generation are we faller into? A Generation that will not believe, or will not ſet their Heart to obtain them. *A Company of Infidels and Fools*, for ſo are all thoſe who do not walk in the way to the *New Jeruſalem*. If you will not conſider, you muſt periſh in your Folly. Look and bethink your ſelves, you are Men; Stand upon your Feet, and ſhake off that drowſie and benum'd Diſpoſition. Be throughly rouzed out of Negligence and Sottiſhneſs: Come to thy ſelf, and hear what ſhall be ſaid unto thee.

1 John 5.4.

The Lord made all things for himſelf, yea even the wicked for the day of evil Prov. 16.4. He will be glorified in all his Works, and thou alſo being the work of his hands art not to think thy ſelf unconcerned, or nothing related to that God, with whom we have all to do. If thou wilt have nothing to do with him, he will

will have to do with thee. Thou art his Creature, and he will deal ſo with thee, as the reſt of mankind according to their deſervings: Thou muſt be either a Partaker of his Mercy or Wrath, *There is mercy O Lord with thee, that thou mayeſt be feared. And his Wrath is likewiſe revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of Men*, Rom. 1. 18. *But the mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting upon them that fear him, and his righteouſneſs upon Children's Children: To ſuch as keep his Covenant, and to thoſe that remember his Commandments to do them*, Pſal. 103. 17, 18. Here you are told, how to have Title unto it: And why ſhouldſt thou ſtick, or make any doubt to do thereafter? If the King or a Great Man ſhould require the ſame of thee, only to do as they bid thee from time to time, and would give Riches and Honour for it, Wouldſt not thou do as much? Although that is the utmoſt they can beſtow; for they can neither give Health, nor preſerve thy Breath from going forth. And wilt thou not fear the *King of Kings, the Lord of Lords*, who hath a much better reward with him, Who holds thy Soul in Life, and when he ſends for it out of this Earthly houſe (if it be rendred meet) will receive it unto himſelf in Glory? Thou doſt not grudge to do any thing for thy Fellow-Creature, if thou canſt get a good Livelihood by him; wilt thou refuſe to ſerve the Lord thy Maker, when by ſo doing *thou ſhalt live for ever*? Thou art contented for that to Labour and Care, this Points out ſomething more. If thou doſt willingly ſo much for preſent Food and Delight, from hence ſomewhat may be obſerved of the Equity of God's ways in alluring us to his Service by inviſible and future Rewards, which are fitted for the inviſible part of us. So this inference ariſes; that if for the good and Conveniencies of a dying Body we readily Labour, we ſhould likewiſe do the ſame as to our immortal Soul. We Conſent, it is reaſonable that we ſhould *Labour for the Meat which periſheth*, much more is it to *Labour for that which endureth unto everlaſting Life*. We are glad if we can have fading neceſſities by following our Trade and Employment, and are reſolved to do it; much more ſhould we rejoyce in our Heavenly Calling, which is for the Attainment of true, perfect and eternal Happineſs. And we ſhould be determined with full purpoſe of Heart to *give all diligence to make our Calling and Election ſure*, for that will ſtand us more in ſtead, it being both for Body and Soul, in a Glorified and united State.: When now

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all the Labour of Man is for his Mouth, Eccleſ. 6. 7. *Meats for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, but God ſhall deſtroy both it and them*, 1 Cor. 6. 13 They ſhall periſh when we are taken hence, but the other ſhall endure. Every thing hath Relation to this end; and (I humbly conceive) God therefore ordained things ſo, that by what Man doth already in the leſs, he ſhould do the ſame in the greater, to lay hold of the hope ſet before him: That he ſhould be moved with like Inducements to the endleſs Life, as to this *Vapour which vaniſheth not*; that he ſhould take the ſame Care of the whole Man, as he doth of the Shell only; that he ſhould alike purſue the *Subſtantial Bleſſedneſs*, as he doth ſome little Circumſtances, of what the World calls *Happineſs*. By what thou doſt already, thou art encouraged to more; what thy ſelf affirmeſt to be right, by this thou art further perſwaded. It is juſt and equal that he who would have Food and Raiment ſhould work for them, when they are ſo to be had; he who neglects that and famiſhes, is a Fool and unpitied: So the things of God's Kingdom are to be had by diligent ſeeking after; and he who doth not, deſervedly periſheth and is miſerable. But the Generality of mankind do behave themſelves wiſely enough as for that, and why not for this alſo? *And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have Life*, John 5. 40. Which manifeſtly imports they might, if they would. *Thoſe which do ſo much immediately in Religion for a ſhort Livelihood, ſhould they not do a little more for the ſaving of the Soul?*

Thou reckoneſt it a great Happineſs to live well at preſent, but conſider of them who have whatſoever can be deſired for Meat, Drink and Raiment; all doth but hold up Life for a time, and leſs would ſerve turn. But they do not continue it, for Rich Men muſt die as well as the Poor and Needy. We muſt not live here always; and therefore are to live as People that muſt die, and expect to be Happy after Death, as it is deſired to be ſo before. Now reaſon with thy ſelf I beſeech thee; all thy deſire is to live handſomely in the World, but if herein thou ſhouldſt obtain thy Will, thou canſt not long enjoy it. Look back to the former Generations, What difference is between thoſe who fared ſumptuouſly every day, and who had but common proviſion of Life? when a great Candle and a ſmall are both burnt out, what odds is between them? As is the Condition of thoſe, who are now gone off from the World, ſo will ours be in a ſhort time. He will be in no better Condition, who Riots and Sports himſelf

himſelf in the Day-time, who lives idly, and yet enjoys fulneſs of Bread; then he who eats it all along in the ſweat of his brow. So that a Wiſe Man ſhould make it his choice rather to live in Obedience then Delicacy, for that will bring him to everlaſting Life; whereas pleaſant Meats and Drinks they ſhall fail, and too often proving a Snare do ſink down to that place, where he is that received his good things in this Life.

Ho every one that Thirſteth, Come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money: Come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price. Wherefore do ye ſpend Money for that which is not Bread? And your Labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your Soul delight it ſelf in Fatneſs, Iſa. 55. 1. 2. If a great Man gives forth that he will keep open Houſe for all Comers, and they ſhall have plenty of good Beef and Ale, we ſhould ſee the Countrey People flock thither in multitudes, and what a Love is kindled in their Hearts for him? but when God makes this Invitation ſcarce one moves a ſtep; a plain Evidence that *they are a very froward Generation, Children in whom is no Faith*, Deut. 32. 20. If another makes a feaſt for them, then they will be ſure to ſet all buſineſs aſide, and come to partake of his good Cheer; but if the Son of God invite you to his Supper, then your Farm or Oxen, or ſome other little Excuſe. *Are ye not partial in this*? That is too mild a Word. *But are ye not Idolaters*, for having more reſpect to a little Creature, then the great and eternal Creator? If you will evade that, becauſe you are not led away with a dumb Idol, but a living Man, yet what the Prophet hath pronounced will be fulfilled: *Curſed is he that truſteth in Man, and maketh Fleſh his Arm, and whoſe Heart departeth from the Lord*, Jer. 17. 5. He gives even unto them all that they have, and can do thy ſelf more good then all the Men of the World. Though this is as it were hidden, for Tryal whether they will draw off from him, and others would run unto them.

Indeed *the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, Rom. 14. 17. but things as will better ſatisfie then they do now: For you eat and drink, and hunger and thirſt again: But if you would ſeek after that, in the mean time you would be quieted with the hopes and Faith thereof, till you come actually to *ſit down at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb*. A Supper, to which all the Dainties of the World are as ſtinking Carrion. It doth infinitely exceed both

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in Delight and Continuance, all the moſt pleaſant things here.

What would you not do at preſent, if you could get ſuch an Eſtate as ſome of thy rich Neighbours have? you would think nothing too hard, many a Sleepleſs Night and laborious Day you would ſuffer with all your Heart, if you might attain it: But thou ſeeſt no way or poſſibility, if thou wouldſt never ſo much deſire to do it: Well, be contented nevertheleſs, and aſſure thy ſelf, that if thou art not ſlothful, but come unto him, who *will meet thee in the way of Righteouſneſs*, and then follow hard after him, thou ſhalt undoubtedly come to Heaven; when the Great Ones, if wicked and diſobedient, ſhall be thruſt down with Shame and Confuſion. Or if they fear God, do thou endeavour to exceed them in Graces and Well-doing, and ſo be more had in Honour by him, who *rewards every Man according to his work*, not ſo much for what Rank and Degree he was in the World. If thou doſt obey the Lord, thou wouldſt with Patience and Quietneſs of Spirit endure whatever low Condition thou art in; and be rather the more thankful, becauſe thereby quickned and ſtirred up to a Godly Life. Sometimes to hunger Prompts to ſtrive the more earneſtly to come to that place where *you ſhall be filled*. You have the leſs Temptation to take up a Reſt here, but ſhould more ſeek after that which is to come. It is an hard Caſe indeed never to do any thing but to take Pains, to be like the Ox or Aſs to live to no other end, but that of Labour; but it is not ſo with you; for *God hath provided better things*, if you would accept them. *He hath ordained a Reſt, and a Promiſe is left us of entring into it.* And we are Commanded *to fear, leaſt any of us ſhould come ſhort of it.* Some we read of, *Who could not enter in becauſe of unbelief.* And this ſame is an hindrance to Men now adays; for what makes them, who do nothing but toil, and yet are unmindful of this true Reſt, unleſs it is becauſe they do not believe any ſuch thing? But if Men are unbelievers whilſt they live, they ſhall not be ſo when they die, for there will ſucceed a certain fearful Expectation of Judgment and Condemnation, The *unbelievers ſhall have their part in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone*, Rev. 21. 8.

Luke 16. 10.

Heb. 2. & 3.

Saith the ſame Divine Witneſs, *I heard a voice from Heaven Saying unto me, Write, Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labours*

and their Works do follow them, Rev. 14. 13. All do not ſo, but only thoſe who die in the Lord. That Saying ſo common in the mouth of Country People, *When ſuch an one is dead, he is happy* (becauſe freed from the Pains and Miſeries of Life) is falſe when applyed to all indifferently, good and bad; for this Bleſſing belongs only to thoſe who have led a Godly Life. By Death, we *fall into the hands of the living God*, and then he may deal with us as ſeemeth good in his ſight; however, being a God of Truth he will do ſo with all of us, as is declared in his Word which is Truth. And therefore it will be ſo with us according as we order our Converſation in this preſent World, by the words written in that Book. Seeing the Caſe is thus, it muſt be the more excellent way to fit our ſelves accordingly. We often provide for thoſe things which never happen; and if they ſhould, are but of ſmall moment. Shall we not much more prepare againſt that which will certainly come, and is of greater Concern to every one of us, then any thing now in the World is? All our Care now is to keep Life for the preſent; and ſhall no Care be had to live for ever? We can never do too much to preſerve Health, and keep of ſullen Death as long as we can: And ſhall not we do the ſame to eſcape the ſecond Death, that wretched Condition in *which Men ſhall ſeek for Death, and it ſhall flee from them?* With all our Pains we cannot hold of temporal Death, and yet we would; we may by the Grace of God preſerve our ſelves from eternal Death, and there we will not. Oh ſtrange madneſs! Unſpeakable Folly! O ye Sons of Men, who hath bewitched you to Act ſo Prepoſterouſly? Death in it ſelf is not more grievous then Pain or Sickneſs now is (nay not ſo much, for as in Health we fall aſleep when we do not perceive it, ſo then thoſe violent Pangs deſtroy the Sence and Feeling) but that which comes to the wicked after renders it exceeding terrible, and that ſhould be moſt dreaded; which would not be in vain, becauſe it would make us flee from the wrath to come. Would we take as great heed leaſt we die after Death, as now we do to ſave our ſelves from Death; then Death ſhould have no Dominion over us, it ſhall not bring Evil, but Good unto us. *The ſting of Death is ſin*, but Command is given to pluck that out. *Caſt away from you all your Tranſgreſſions, whereby ye have Tranſgreſſed, and make you a new Heart and a new Spirit; for why will ye die, O houſe of* Iſrael? *for I have no Pleaſure in the Death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord God. Where-*

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fore turn your ſelves, and live ye, Ezek. 18.31, 32. Here you are taught, and alſo enjoyned how, though you die you may live again.

Look a little further then this preſent Life. *It is of few days, and full of trouble.* Who would place his Confidence in that which is uneaſie, and muſt an end? Time haſteneth away, Death is coming on. Every Man muſt at length cloſe with it. He muſt either lye down in Peace, which is the Portion of the righteous; or dye as the wicked do in Horrour and Anguiſh of mind, or in a ſtupid Condition, as is the Caſe of moſt. However ſome admire this ſort of Death, for they ſay he dies like a Lamb, yet *there is no Peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked*, Iſa. 57.21. Such a Death is like a drunken Mans falling down a ſteep Rock, his Sottiſhneſs hath caſt him into ſuch a Sleep, that he knows not whether he is tumbling; notwithſtanding he comes to a fearful end. One dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins perceives not whether he tends, when he is juſt dropping into the Fire; yet as ſoon as he is there, he is ſenſible to a Witneſs, and ſo will remain for evermore. Whatever gnorant By-ſtanders may think, ſuch a ſort of Death muſt be a ſad ſight to all knowing Chriſtians; for who can approve of what is occaſioned by unbelief, groſs Ignorance, or habitual Wickedneſs? All which Seal men up to the Day of Deſtruction: There is a great difference between this and the end of the Righteous; for the one is Senceleſs, and Calls not upon God but in a general way, as Lord have mercy upon me, or the like, which any one may do if he be never ſo ungodly: But the other can expreſs his Peaceable Condition, and ſhew forth good Grounds of hope, and call upon God his Saviour with that feelingneſs which no Stranger to the Covenant of Grace can. *Righteouſneſs delivereth from Death*, Prov. 11.4. It preſerves from all the dreadfulneſs thereof, which nothing beſides doth: Wickedneſs ſhall not deliver thoſe who are given unto it; but is the cauſe of all that Miſery, which this binds Men over unto. Let them ruffle and ſport themſelves never ſo much, their End is coming. They muſt ſicken, and go away to Account for all their Frolick and Madneſs. There is ſet before thee a good and evil Death; one you muſt have, and therefore be ſure to chooſe the beſt. Be good and do Good, and thou ſhalt never die amiſs. When thou art wearied with Labour all the days of thy Life, this will ſet thee at Reſt; but if thou art not willing and obedient, thou

mayeſt drudge on ſtill without any hope, for after toil here will ſucceed endleſs pains; according as now thou behaveſt thy ſelf, thou ſhalt fare well or ill hereafter. So will it be with Thee and Me. *For we muſt all appear before the judgment Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. When the Sun ſhall become black as a Sackcloth of Hair,
Rev. 6. and the Moon become as Blood, and the Heavens ſhall depart as a ſcroll roled together; The trump of the Arch-Angels ſhall ſound, and the Dead ſhall hear, and leap out of their Graves like frighted Men. Neither greatneſs nor ſmallneſs ſhall excuſe from coming forth; The mighty Men, and every bond Man, and every free Man hid themſelves. This will be more dreadful then a blazing Comet, or the greateſt Thunder and Lightning. It may be, we have no buſineſs at thoſe Aſſizes which are holden twice a Year; but at this general Grave-delivery, which is kept once for all, our dead bodies ſhall ariſe, *and every one of us ſhall give account of himſelf to God*, Rom. 14. 12. Mens hearts will fail them for fear, and if conſcious to themſelves of evil, will wiſh that they might return into this World again to live over their paſt life, for then they would be better provided. But when the Priſoner comes to be tried, is he let go free only upon his bare ſaying, he will not Steal nor commit Murder any more? No, he muſt anſwer for what he hath done. We know it before hand (that when it ſhall come, we may have no excuſe or plea) that *of this and every day of our life after years of Diſcretion we are in danger to be called to account*. Although at preſent we make a mock of ſin, we follow it with Greedineſs and Merriment, valuing it as a matter of naught; yet when God enters into Judgment, what was formerly ſo light in Opinion, will ſink them down into the bottomleſs Pit. There is no other way to eſcape this, but now, even now to *judge our ſelves that we be not judged, nor condemned with the World*, 1 Cor. 11. 31, 32. *God now commandeth all Men every where to repent, becauſe he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordained*, Acts 17. 30. 31. The good have no reaſon to fear, becauſe they are to be judged by him who is now *their advocate with the Father, and the propitiation for their ſins*, 1 John 2. 1, 2. *They may have boldneſs in the day of Judgment, becauſe as he is, ſo are they in this World*, 1 John 4. 17. But as for thoſe, who by continued doing the Works

Works of the Devil (in as much as in them lies) build up that which he came to deſtroy, ſhall receive from his Mouth that terrible Sentence, *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

When the Words are gone forth, *theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting Puniſhment*, Mat. 25. 46. Did we ſee this doleful herd as they are going, we ſhould fear: What God hath ſaid by his Son muſt come to paſs, ſo it will be as certainly as if we now ſaw it with our eyes. What can be more forcible to make us take the utmoſt heed, that our ſelves be not among them? To whom the Summers heat ſeems ſo grievous, and every little ſpark that falls upon the body ſo painful, How can they abide to lye down in everlaſting fire? Who now think it ſo irkſome to tarry a few and evil days here on Earth, though they have ſeveral good ones intermingled; How can they endure to be in Hell for thouſands and millions of Years without an hour of comfort, or the leaſt freedom from Miſery? Let me ask thee, O Man, ſuppoſe thou ſaweſt a Fiery Furnace, and there thou mighteſt continue alive for a thouſand Years, how much of the Worlds pleaſure wouldſt thou require to undergo the torment thereof for that time? I am confident thou wouldſt not take all the delights under the Sun all thy life long. And why then wilt thou for the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, bring upon thy Body and Soul thoſe Eternal Plagues? The damned are ſet forth in Scripture, ſuffering all thoſe evils which are now accounted greateſt in the World. What is all this for? But to make the more haſt to eſcape from the Stormy Wind and Tempeſt. By the ſame reaſon that we flee from the face of a Serpent, the Sword of a devouring Enemy, to ſave our ſelves from Fire or Water, or any thing which would hurt; We are alſo obliged to avoid the damnation of Hell, for this will more torment, then all thoſe things put together. That is to be done by fearing the Lord our God, and keeping his Commandments; *for he hath prepared thoſe things only for the wicked and diſobedient, that none ſhould be ſo.*

As the Puniſhments are ſevere enough to frighten from Tranſgreſſion, ſo is the Reward ſufficient to encourage any Soul to Obedience; It is deſcribed by thoſe things which are now moſt apt to raiſe our deſires, and ſtir up our induſtry towards obtaining of them. If one ſhould tell a poor Country Man how he might get Wealth, he would lift up his ears and attend readily to this meſ-

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ſage; there is none can bring him ſuch tidings, but let him hear what the Spirit ſaith, *I counſel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the fire that thou mayeſt be rich*, Rev. 3. 18. With what eagerneſs do others run after Pleaſures, which are unſatisfactory and ſudden? And it ſeems there ſhould be the ſame diligence uſed to be abundantly ſatisfied with the goodneſs of the Lord, to come *into his preſence where is fullneſs of joy, and at his right hand are pleaſures for evermore*, Pſal. 16. 11. The Men of this World will expoſe themſelves to hardſhip and inconvenience to get Praiſe and Honour, though for all their Souls continue reſtleſs; *But Glory, Honour, and Peace to every Man that worketh good*, Rom. 2. 10. Are as worthy to be ſought after and had. Heaven is repreſented by the ſo much admired Idols of this lower World, and that with greater advantage to give more full and laſting contentment of mind, then the beſt thing on Earth now doth. If the good things before us do ſomewhat refreſh, theſe will much more: and (contrary to the preſent) they ſhall never be taken from us, nor we from them. Conceive any thing that is delightful and pleaſant, it comes very ſhort of the joys above, as ſounding braſs and tinkling Cymbal compared to the beſt Muſick; ſufficient for a Man to be aſſured, that it is greater then he can expect or imagine: if he hears or reads never ſo much of what words cannot expreſs to the utmoſt, yet when he comes to the enjoyment, he will affirm as one did of the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, *The one half was not told me.*

Some are apt to think, It is pity we may not have this great Happineſs at preſent; But who in his very thoughts doth murmur at the good will and pleaſure of the Almighty? None accuſes his Bounty, who freely gives the reverſion of a good Eſtate; every one beſtows his gifts in what manner, and at what time he pleaſes. And may not the Sovereign Lord of the World do the like? *Is it not lawful for the good Man of the Houſe, to do what he will with his own*? The Mighty God, who is ſo much above and independent from all his Creatures, is pleaſed (Oh the riches of his love and goodneſs) to deal ſo with them as one dealeth with another. None is payed till the work done; and when we likewiſe have laboured in the Vineyard till the going down of the Sun, we are to receive what he hath promiſed; The prize is not given till the race is ended. *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. 2. 10. *Behold I come quickly, and my reward*

See Iſa. 40. 10.

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is with me, to give to every man according as his work ſhall be, Rev. 22. 12. Beſides preſent peace all along, there is ſomewhat given in hand, *the earneſt and firſt fruits of the Spirit*, thoſe little glimpſes of future Glory, the delights of the inward Man; But theſe are not to be compared with what ſhall be revealed hereafter. *For ſince the beginning of the World, Men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye ſeen, O God beſides thee what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him*, Iſa. 64. 4. So it is his Ordinance, that we ſhould for ſome time patiently tarry for them; *It is good that a man ſhould both hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord*, Lam. 3. 26. The great Men of the World have many waiting to ſpeak with them, who do not grudge if they can get any kindneſs from them, yea, they are contented with the promiſe of a future favour. Is not the Lord of Lords as worthy to be waited for, as they? Are not his Bleſſings as much to be valued? Are not his Promiſes as ſure? Nay, if I may ſo ſpeak, we have more Civility from the Great God, then from exalted Earth-Worms: For they are Men of Pride, look for Attendance, and therefore will be hard to be ſpoken withal. *But the Lord will wait that he may be gracious, for the Lord is a God of Judgment. Bleſſed are all they that wait for him*, Iſa. 30. 18. The things he hath provided are as worthy to be waited for, and it is meet we ſhould pay the ſame and greater reſpect to Almighty God, as is done to *Man whoſe breath is in his Noſtrils, for wherein is he to accounted of*? Iſa. 2. 22. God doth wonderfully condeſcend to the Children of Men, to let his doings be judged of by them. *Yet ſaith the Houſe of* Iſrael, *the way of the Lord is not equal O houſe of* Iſrael, *are not my wayes equal? Are not your wayes unequal?* Ezek. 18. 29. Are you not bold with your Maker by finding fault with his diſpenſations, unleſs you preſently know the reaſon thereof? You have a reaſon, but are to be put in mind he is a God of Majeſty and Power; *Known unto him are all his Works*, Acts 15. 18. And he is not bound to give account of any; ſufficient for you to underſtand, and refer them all *to the good pleaſure of his Will*. Thus for his Promiſes and Threatnings he might accompliſh them whenſoever he would, and ſo they ſhall be in the appointed time; which though to come, yet will be moſt certainly. And conſidering how much every one of us are concerned in them, they ſhould more affect us then the things now do before us. If it be juſt, that he who builds an Houſe ſhould dwell in it; or he

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that Plants an Orchard eat the Fruit thereof: So is it moſt juſt and reaſonable, that who made Man ſhould be ſerved by him. Upon this Account alone God might Challenge our Obedience and Homage without doing any thing more for us; but further as a moſt gracious and bountiful Lord, he Promiſes a Reward though we deſerve none. And being moſt abſolute over the work of his hands, *For hath not the Potter power over the Clay of the ſame Lump to make one Veſſel to Honour, another to Diſhonour?* Rom. 9. 21. Yet he vouchſafes to give warning before he daſhes any to the Ground. *Now conſider this ye that forget God, leſt I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*, Pſal. 50. 22. He hath not threatned with eternal Death and Miſery, unleſs we are diſobedient, which is only our own fault; ſo that he is moſt righteous in his dealings towards the Children of Men.

Hear this all ye People, give ear all ye Inhabitants of the World. Both Low and High, Rich and Poor together. Such is the Statute and Decree gone out upon all Fleſh. Let none think, becauſe they are of low Degree, therefore they ſhall not be regarded by the Moſt High: For all Men are the ſame to God. *He hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men*, Acts 17. 26. Out of the ſame Lump, and according to the ſame Mould he faſhioned them all.
Exod. 30. 15. The pooreſt acknowledge, that they are as much minded by God as the rich, and ſo far they are right; but then they go further, and make themſelves his only Favourites. The ground of this Error is through Miſ-application of thoſe Promiſes in Scripture concerning this Condition. But let them not be deceived; for where is any mention made of ſpiritual good things, it is to thoſe Poor only, who walk in their Integrity. *Hath not God choſen the Poor of this World* (the Apoſtle doth not ſay all of them, but thoſe who are) *rich in Faith and Heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promiſed to them that love him*, Jam. 5. 2. So they muſt believe and love God, and then they muſt avoid ſinning againſt him; otherwiſe they have no place in Heaven.

Indeed many of them do ſo; and more would if they did apply themſelves to *God and the Word of his Grace*, which is able both to bring in and build up. Thoſe whom the Proud ones call the ordinary ſort of People, will make the greater number in Heaven; We ſee more of them (allowing for their multitude) that Practice Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, then we can amongſt thoſe of higher rank; *for theſe have altogether broken the Yoke, and burſt*

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the bands, Jer. 5. 5. Being governed by Self-will, and their own humour more then the Laws of God; but the others are not altogether so forgetful and refractory. And have a good will towards God in General; but the Prophet remarks truly how they have not that knowledge which is to be desired for; They understand not the things of Religion so well as they should, but follow their own Opinions and Fancies, *Satan which deceiveth the whole World*, Rev. 12. 9. Hath taken advantage thereof, inflicting into them errors and deceits; if you would indeed be in the right way to Heaven, and not miss thereof at last, give attendance to that Word which is to shew unto all the *Path of Life*. Jer. 5. 4.

When some have well resolved, then they are distracted about the way; one saith it is this, another that. It is agreed by all that the Scriptures do shew what is right; so what they point out, it is good to follow. They give the Character of some who *Taught the way of God in Truth*, Mat. 22. 16. Acts 16. 17. And therefore according to what is Written, those both said and did, it may be most surely trusted unto; There have been Questions and different Opinions in past Ages, but little is said of them in Holy Writ. The Prophets make no mention of them, speaking against Idolatry, but say nothing as to Modes of Worship; Our Saviour Speaks little concerning those Seperate Meetings in his time, and doth not express much zeal one way or another. His Apostles followed the same steps: One witnesseth, *In every Nation he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him*, Acts. 10. 35. Being applyed to *Cornelius* a Gentile, as may be gathered from *Acts* 11. 18 The diversity here was greater then amongst several Communions of Christians at this day, and therefore much more will they be saved in each. Another Apostle saith, *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God*, 1 Cor. 7 19. *In Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by love*, Gal. 5. 6. *A new Creature*, Gal. 6. 15. That was as important a Question as those in controversie now, but there is not so much in them as Obedience and Holiness; To which alone the promises of God are, and nothing at all to those distinguishing terms of Perswasion among us. It is evident from *Psal.* 25. 12, 14. *John* 7. 17. 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. *Phil.* 3. 15. That whosoever Of different Communions.

ever ſincerely fears God with his whole heart, ſhall be directed into all neceſſary and ſaving Truth; and then he muſt lay aſide all Preposſeſſions and Prejudice, Pride, Humour, Wordly Reaſons, coming in ſimplicity of Soul only out of a deſire to be right, and *receive the love of the Truth that he may be ſaved*, 2 Theſ. 2. 10. For this is evident, Continuance in a willful and known error is as dangerous, as a willful and known ſin; and therefore to be equally avoided. The Word doth diſcover Good and Evil, Truth and Falſhood; to the Duty of every one is to ſet his Conſcience as in the ſight of God, with a readineſs to think and do what is moſt according to his revealed Will; and then he ſhall never periſh through error or falſhood.

All Worſhip is deſigned to pleaſe, and obtain acceptance with Almighty God. *The hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him*, John 4. 23. But this doth in no wiſe excuſe from an humble bodily geſture and reverence of the outward Man; the Subjection of both is to be ſhewed: *Therefore glorifie God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are Gods*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Certainly this Apoſtle knew what was a Goſpel and Spiritual Worſhip, yet *He kneeled down and Prayed*, Acts 20. 36. The like did our Saviour, Luke 22. 41. And *Stephen* and *Peter*, Acts 7. 60. Acts 9. 40. It is to be obſerved in Publick Worſhip, for ſo did *Paul*, that being more Solemn and whereby God is Glorified; Though the Lolling ſort of behaviour is ſo much in uſe among the Country People, when they come into the preſence of God, let them uſe it before their Governour or Great Men, How will they be pleaſed with it? And if they will not, neither will he, who even now remains a *Great King, and his Name is dreadful among the Heathen*, Mal. 1. 8, 14. And though ſome may think that no more then another place, yet they may conſider what our Lord did, *John* 2. 16, 17. *Mark* 11. 15, 16, 17. Signifying plainly that more regard is to be had to *the Houſe* Iſa. 56. 7. *of Prayer ſo called of all Nations and People*, extending to the Goſpel times when they come in. The Apoſtle finds fault with the Pſal. 29. 9. *Corinthians*, abuſing of the Sacrament, making a Common Meal of it. *Have ye not Houſes to eat or drink in, or deſpiſe ye the Church of God?* 1 Cor. 11. 22. The ſubject of that Chapter is about a comely behaviour in the Holy Aſſemblies; What can be ſaid to theſe plain Scriptures, or how can they excuſe themſelves from

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Sin in not obſerving them? Let Men put what meaning they will, God is judge himſelf; and they may at the laſt day be ſeverely reproved for not obeying that command, the reaſon whereof is eternally Obligatory, *Ye ſhall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary: I am the Lord*, Lev. 19. 30.

The deſign of the whole Goſpel is Peace, Unity and Love, ſee *Rom.* 12. 18. *Rom.* 16, 17. 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. *Phil.* 2. 12. *Eph.* 4. 3, 4, 5. *Col.* 3. 12, 13, 15. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 13. Religion ſhould of all things moſt endear one to another, but it is only the corruption and abuſe thereof, which turns it into matter of Quarrel, Hatred, and Animoſity. Many of us differ in little Opinions not neceſſary to Salvation; and therefore ſhould in no wiſe for them endanger that by not obſerving the weightier matters of the Law, Mercy and Love of one another. After what manner did our Fathers ſerve God, who are in Peace? *They continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip; all that believed were together, continuing daily with one accord in the Temple*, Acts 2. 42, 44, 46. *And the Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul*, Acts 4. 32. It was propheſied of the Goſpel times, that *many Nations ſhall Come and ſay, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the Houſe of the God of* Jacob, *Mic.* 4. 2. *Who are theſe that flie like Doves to a Window?* Iſa. 60. 8. So harmleſs and peaceably ſhould they move together; Then would ceaſe all jealouſie and bitter envying; There would be no more heard the voice of the Slanderer, Blaſphemer and Cenſorious Perſon; then Malice, Hatred, and the Deſtructiveneſs of exorbitant zeal would not be ſeen among us; but we ſhould all love as Brethren, be Pitiful and Courteous one to another. How happy would it be if Chriſtians were of the ſame mind? (I do not mean in every Queſtion, for ſeeing we know but in part, and all have not the ſame meaſure of underſtanding, that is not as yet) but in the mean while, we might all agree to the ſame manner, and meet at the ſame place of Worſhip. The promiſes of God are that it ſhall be ſo, as *Jer.* 32. 39. *Zeph.* 3. 8, 9. *Iſa.* 30. 21, 26. *Eph.* 4. 13. Which was fulfilled in the Primitive Times, but in a leſſer degree, as one ſheaf to the whole Harveſt; and will be again more univerſally, when ſo reſtored as it was then. Chriſt did break down the Partition-wall between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and thoſe dividing impoſitions are to be taken away, before all Chriſtians can come and meet in the ſame Room. However in the

mean while it is one and the same House, though there be several apartments; They are *one Fold and one Shepherd*, John 10. 16. Though at present there be several dividing hurdles intermixt of Mans setting up, which at length will be removed. And so what is said of the Unity of the Church, *Joh.* 17. 11, 21, 22, 23. *Eph.* 4, 5, 6. *Cant.* 6. 9. It comprehends all Gods faithful People in the whole World; *God setteth the solitary in Families*, Psal. 68. 6. Or in the new Translation, *maketh Men to be of one mind in an house*: so in his good time will grant to them all, (However distinguished or named) *to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus; that they may with one Mind and one Mouth glorifie God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. 15. 5, 6.

Of deceits

In the beginning of time Satan beguiled *Eve* through his Subtlety, so doth he even now continue to deceive all her Children; this design of the *Wicked one* doth prove destructive to thousands and millions, both of learned and unlearned, wise and foolish; for the things of God are hid from the wise and prudent, being by them accounted as foolishness. And then Satan gets an advantage over them also; for they are not endued with the Wisdom of God, which alone discovers his devices; He exercises his whole craft and skill with these; But where ignorance abounds, there he abominably thrives in the trade of deceiving, and he strangely leads away captive silly people laden with sins. It is wonderful and sad to consider how miserably poor mankind is deluded about their everlasting Happiness or Misery, then which nothing can be of greater concern, and therefore we should take all imaginable heed and circumspection least we be mistaken herein. Yet of this we use the least care; so strongly hath the evil one possest us and lulled to peace that we are willing to be deceived by him; we would fain have those things he suggests to be true, and therefore presently believe them without Examination; as if we could be saved by a lie, or excused by what draws Gods further displeasure, the *not desiring the knowledge of his ways.*

Satan transforms himself into an Angel of Light, he did once tempt our Lord with Scripture, so doth he those who believe on his name, and confirmeth his deceivings over again with the written Word. The Wisdom of the Father was not imposed upon by a false application; his Doctrine is left to succour us, and other assistances are given, so it is our own fault if seduced

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or overcome by him. Innumerable are the Whims and Fancies Men have to allow themſelves in ſome Sin or other, for which they will preſently cite a Text of Scripture, and then they conclude they are right, becauſe that in their thinking tells them ſo. They reckon themſelves ſure, becauſe we are to ſearch the Scriptures, whether theſe things are ſo; and there they find it ſo, what can they deſire more? This is a dangerous and common Deceit when that which ſhould lead them into Truth, through wrong Interpretation or Application is the cauſe of Error. Nothing is ſo frequent and ordinary to be heard, as naming a place of Holy Writ in Vindication, or mitigation of ſuch a Sin or Wickedneſs. Almoſt every ſingle Perſon hath ſome particular miſtaken Opinions of his own, which he tells unto others, who again acquaint him with theirs; ſo they are full of deceitful Falſhoods.

The Reaſon of all is, We being by Nature the Children of Wrath, through Corruption Prone to Evil as the Sparks fly upwards, and ſtrongly inclined to break Gods Commandments: But he having threatned, *The Soul that ſinneth ſhall die*, the fear of this makes us look about and ſtop in the Courſe we deſign to go in. Then cometh the Evil one and Whiſpers; that we may tranſgreſs, and if we repent at ſuch a time in Sickneſs, Old Age, Death-bed, all is well enough: Or if we have not a mind to commit all iniquity, yet we may break this or that Divine Law, now live in one Sin, and then another as our inclinations lead us, for which, *Pſal.* 103. 14. is alledged, which is commonly quoted otherwiſe then it is in the Bible, God knoweth we are Fleſh, and therefore it is falſly inferred, ſuch Works of the Fleſh, as *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. are excuſable enough, and for further Satisfaction they are miſ-called Infirmities. The former deceit is not ſo univerſally received; moſt conſidering People ſpie out the Falſhood, Vanity and Danger thereof: But the laſt is wonderfully cheriſhed and entertained. Men according to their ſeveral Diſpoſitions are more inclined to one ſin then another, ſome dear beloved Luſt, a ſinful Pleaſure or Profit, *They will ſpare and forſake it not, but keep it ſtill*, Job 20. 13. for this they ſeek out ſo many Excuſes and Pretences. Being reſolved to hold faſt, they fain would have it not be ſinful at

That of Pſal. 103. 14. doth not extend to wilful continued Tranſgreſſions, for it is before ſaid, ſuch are removed from us; and then the Lord pitieth them that fear him, ſo as not to impute their Sins of Inadvertency, unavoidable Ignorance or natural Weakneſs.

at all; or at leaſt not in them, for ſuch and ſuch ſuch Reaſons. But if it be ſo apparently againſt the word of God (which makes no Allowance or Diſpenſation for Circumſtances, or Conveniency) that they cannot throughly ſatisfie their Conſcience, though they have long endeavoured it; why then, they muſt grant it to be their failing. The ſubtil Enemy Promiſes, that though they ſtill continue, yet they ſhall never go to Hell for one Sin producing ſuch Arguments from Scripture and common Reaſon. And hence begins to work in them with all deceiveableneſs. He repreſents ſeveral Thoughts to ſooth and quiet Conſcience: That done, they at length become ſecure, and make no manner of doubt but it ſhall go well with them at laſt. Now they are in the Condition wiſhed for, and whoſoever would diſturb them therein is no Friend of theirs. They hold him to be *their Enemy, who tells them the Truth*, and endeavours to convince them of the damnable Errour they are in. They return Hatred for Good-will, for they had rather run Blind into the Ditch, go Hoodwinkt to Hell, then have their Eyes opened and eſcape it: So ſtrangely are they beſotted by Sin and Satan. But it is reckoned no unkindneſs to ſave one from drowning, if thereby he plucks a little Hair off from his Head; and the Irkſomeneſs in like manner muſt be endured, which is neceſſary for Interruption of Security and Diſcovery of Deceits.

Let Men deceive themſelves, yet they cannot deceive their Judge. The Fooliſhneſs of Men ſhall never Out-wit the *All-wiſe God*; neither ſhall he be put off with vain Excuſes or Pretences. *The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed*, 1 Sam. 2. 3. He is a God of Power, and none can get into his Manſions above without his Will; and he can make all the Devices of the wicked to be of none effect. He is a God of Truth, and therefore what he hath ſpoken in theſe laſt days by his Son, ſhall be fulfilled. Who ſaith, *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him at the laſt day*, John. 12. 48. And thoſe idle Pleas which guilty Perſons ſhall offer for themſelves, will not be allowed of, as appears, *Mat.* 7. 22, 23, and *Mat.* 25. 44. So is the Caſe at this day; for at the Aſſizes no Priſoner how guilty ſoever would be Condemned, if every little trifle and excuſe he makes for himſelf, might be received and ſave his Life: Whereas the Judge doth not regard his idle Sayings and frivolous Pretences,

ces, but proceeds against him for what he hath done according to the written Law of the Land. If Men flatter themselves in Evil, because they think they have a place of Scripture on their side; they are further to know, that according to the righteous Interpretation of Christ, and not their own wicked Wrestings, and Mis-applications all must for ever stand or fall. As such are all those meanings which may seem to give allowance to any manner of Sin: For it is a certain and eternal Rule. *Whatever Doctrine or Opinion doth Countenance living in any wilful and known Sin, cannot be of God; neither hath it any right Grounds from his Word.* For though Men of Prevaricating minds do take Arguments from the Law of the Most High to favour that which his Soul abhors, as by endeavouring to make the Holy Spirit a defender of impurity, his righteous Statutes to maintain their unjust Actions, by palliating a Lye with the word of Truth, and proving such a thing to be no Sin by that which is the alone Rule of Good and Evil, and which doth plainly forbid it; but by Glosses, Distinctions, Restrictions and Sentiments of their own devising, they would have it pass for none. This is to *pervert the right ways of the Lord, to do violence to his Law*, and also they *are partial* therein; for they take up what seems to make for them, and neglect others which are manifestly contrary to what they would have. If such a thing is for their Gain or Delight, although plainly forbidden as they cannot deny, yet they commit it safely without fear from such an Example or Expression they found therein, and however far fetcht it shall serve to their purpose. Cometh this abuse from the Nature of Scripture, or Difficulty of understanding it? In no Wise, for it strictly forbids all manner of Sin and Falshood. *They also do no iniquity, they walk in his ways: Thy word is very pure*, Psal. 119. 3. and Verse 140. *Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy word is Truth*, John 17. 17. And those places which command and exhort Holy Life, are so easie to be understood, that none can be mistaken in them. *The Way-faring Men, though Fools, shall not err therein*, Isa. 35. 8.

One great Reason of Deceits is from what is said, Jer. 5. 30, 31. *A wonderful and horrible thing is Committed in the Land. The Prophets Prophesie falsly, and the Priests bear Rule by their means: And my People love to have it so, and what will ye do in the end thereof?* Those who have taken upon them the Office of interpreting, to serve their own Interest, and to please Men, have interpreted falsly,

falsly. Being bound to maintain such Doctrines and Opinions, they have wrested the Scriptures in defence of them: And have concealed several Truths which would have confuted them. Such have turned and winded the good word of God as it seemed best to make a Gain thereof: Others also have *hid their Eyes from my Sabbaths*, Ezek. 22 26. By subtil Distinctions have made the Commandments of God of none Effect, as the *Pharisees* of old did concerning the Fifth, so some later have done concerning the Fourth. *And many such like things do ye.* Who have Slubbered over that Particular and strict Obligation of the Gospel Commands, and out of that have *Prophesied smooth things.* Who can find a faithful Interpreter? According to the Church or Party listed in, so they have construed. Not making known in all things what was the very mind of God, but for the Divine meaning have laid down the meer Fancies of their own Brain. And putting another Sense then what they thought was true and Genuine at the time of doing it. *Who Prophesie out of their own Hearts*, Ezek. 13. 2. and send forth Imaginations instead of Truth. How bold are some in determining what is Sin, and what is not? How do they Lord it over our Faith, and Magisterially lay down their Propositions, as if they had known the mind of the Lord, and been his Counsellors? yet (a certain Contutation to that) some have done it otherwise then from his Book, as may be observed further of them and others: *They have healed also the hurt of the Daughter of my People slightly, saying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace*, Jer. 6. 14 Who by their Doctrines hinder that Degree of *Holiness* and *Circumspection* which People should arrive at, for they Confidently teach such a thing is no Duty, which yet is a Duty; and such a thing to be no Sin, which yet is a Sin, if the Scripture abstracted from corrupt Glosses may be the alone Judge thereof. They abuse the Apostles words, by calling it an over-liberal Charity to cover a multitude of Sins; but it is perfidiousness to make others believe such a thing is no Sin, and so more securely go on to Hell, because they perceive it not. These cry out horribly against Superstition, and therefore are willing to allow so much Liberty. Which yet, *Isa.* 5. 20. makes not so much against as commonly cited; for that is intended against those who flourish over and get Reputation for wickedness, Discountenancing Good and confound the Nature of things, which he expresseth elsewhere. *your turning of things upside down, Isa.* 29. 16.

Mark. 7. 13.

Exod. 23. 13.

Eph. 5. 15.

29. 16. And then we know upon whom it moſt falls. However, if ſome ſhould make that a Sin which is no Sin (whom the Scripture do not make ſo much mention of, as the Voice of the multitude falſly accuſe) others ſhould not run over to the worſe and more dangerous extream of making that no Sin, which in truth is ſo. The Apoſtle was of another mind, when he ſaid, *Abſtain from all appearance of Evil*, 1 Theſ. 5. 22. And the great Command *of loving God with all the Heart* (which comprehends all the very Thoughts and Intents thereof) dictates other Doctrine; for that doth not admit of any thing which comes near diſpleaſing of him. In doubtful things to refrain is the ſafer way; for to do without being perſwaded, or conſidering the Lawfulneſs of them, argues more of wicked Preſumption, then Godly diſcretion. The common Deceit is, they think it no Evil, and therefore it is not ſo; whereas Chriſt will judge the Secrets of Men by his Goſpel, and not by their own Thoughts: in the mean while by the Law is the knowledge of Good and Evil, and not by a private Spirit.

Thus ſaith the Lord God, Wo unto the fooliſh Prophets, that follow their own Spirit, and have ſeen nothing. Becauſe, even becauſe they have ſeduced my People, ſaying Peace, and there was no Peace; and one built up a Wall, and others daubed it with untempered Morter: Thus ſaith the Lord God, I will break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered Mor- Ezek. 13. *ter, & bring it down to the ground, ſo the Foundation thereof ſhall be diſco-* 12. *vered, and ye ſhall be conſumed in the midſt thereof, and ye ſhall know that I am the Lord*, Ezek. 13. 3, 10, 14. When God ariſeth to Judgment, What will become of all thoſe fine and acceptable Doctrines, Menpleaſers have delivered in their Teachings or perſonal Converſation? What will ſignifie all their delicate Soothing Men in their Sins? For we are not to be judged by them. What will it avail if they do wrongfully apply Gods Mercies, when there is no Conviction or humbling for Sin, for he is the alone Giver thereof, and beſt knows to whom it belongs? Whatever others have built up, ſhall be pulled down; the Hearts of all ſhall be laid open: Who have propheſied Lyes ſhall ſuffer for their iniquity, and all the World ſhall know, He alone is to determine of every Mans work of what ſort it is, and to give the Reward or Puniſhment accordingly. Although the Paſtors of all ſorts to gratifie their ſeveral Hearers do *ſpeak ſmooth things, Propheſie Deceits*, Iſa. 30. 10. What ſtead will it ſtand them in at the laſt day? Such are liked of now for quiet and plauſible Inſtructers; but neither will this

help them, *If they be highly esteemed amongst Men, and should be an Abomination in the sight of God*, Luke 16. 15. If they be at present spoken well of by their Hearers, *so were the false Prophets*, Luke 6. 26. but what if Cursed by them hereafter? Notwithstanding at present, the People love to have it so: But would they then be consumed in their Errours? They cry up those Discourses which give them ground of hope, though they still retain their iniquity. They would have God to be all Mercy: Indeed it is greater then can be expressed, but then why will they not in the mean time sincerely endeavour to be so qualified, that they may be Partakers thereof. His other attributes must be also taken in, Wisdom, Justice, Truth, and Holiness; What God was in the beginning, the same he is now, and so continues for evermore, *With whom is no Variableness, neither shadow of turning*, Jam. 1. 17. Being such as he hath revealed himself in his word, and that also endureth for ever.

It is a vain and absurd Fancy, that some flatter themselves withal, that things are so, because they wish and would have them so. If they could reach up and pull down the High and Lofty One, lead away Captive (as hath been done with dumb Idols) the Li-
Isa. 24. 5. ving and Almighty God; then indeed, but not before, they might reverse and make void the Ordinances of Heaven, themselves give Laws to the Soveraign Disposer of all things, and make them according to their own Fancy and Desire. But still *The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*; and if some would not have him Reign over them, it signifieth not. *My word that goeth forth out of my mouth shall not return void, but it shall accomplish that which I please*, Isa. 55. 11. *Should it be according to thy mind? he will recompence it whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose*, Job 34. 33. At this rate no Sentence of Condemnation would ever pass, if the Guilty might put what Sense they would on the Laws against which they had offended. And those eternal Decrees for the final Condition of all mankind would be of as little effect as Letters written in the Sand, which they might spoil after they had made them. Thus to imagine is more silly then the Fool who *saith in his heart, there is no God*; for it is not so absurd as to think there is one, but he is to do whatever vile Miscreants would have him: Surely among all the Foolishness of Men there is not such to be found; yet how common is it for them to get a fine and pleasant Notion concerning their own eternal State, and conclude

conclude themſelves Happy therein, as if it muſt neceſſarily be ſo, becauſe now they Fancy ſo, and at laſt it was to depend upon their own idle Conceits, but not the infallible Judgment and ſure word of God. But for all they cannot fully perſwade themſelves of their own Deceits; a thought will return (though endeavoured to be ſtifled) that it may be otherwiſe. If they would retire into the Spirit of their minds, ſetting aſide that Willingneſs to be deceived, they would be even condemned of themſelves. If they did ſearch and examine their own Conſciences, and that not lightly and after the manner of Diſſemblers with God, they cannot raiſe to themſelves ſuch falſe Hopes and Expectations as ſome do. They are diſobedient and willing to remain ſo, and therefore are deceived.

Why they refrain from groſs Sins, no Extortioner, no Swearer, and ſuch like they ſay they are: But do they refrain from all? *Whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and offend in one point is Guilty of all*, *Jam.* 2. 10. It is as much oppoſing the Will of God in one inſtance as in twenty. When that commandeth ſuch a thing to be done or not done, he who doth contrary (though in a ſmall Matter) his own Will taketh place before the Will of God, which is the direct Evil of Sin, which comprehends Pride, Malice and Stubbornneſs. The continued diſobedience of one Precept involves in the ſame Condemnation as of many, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Rev.* 21. 8. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Treaſure hid in a Field, the which when a Man hath found he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and ſelleth all that he hath, and buyeth that Field*, Mat. 13. 44. he muſt part with all Sin and Wickedneſs if he intends to come there. It may be ſaid that cannot be, *For in many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 2. But it muſt of every known habitual Sin, for that may be done. *Ye have not yet reſiſted unto Blood, ſtriving againſt ſin*, Heb. 12. 4. This ſounds harſh, who can do it? Any one that will ſeriouſly, and in good earneſt endeavour to do ſo.

1 Kings 11 2. Lev. 26. 21 24.

What God hath ſaid and decreed cannot be altered, and therefore it concerns us to try and examine our ſelves, that when the Lord cometh we may be found accepted of him, *It is appointed for all once to die, and after that to Judgment*, Heb. 9. 27. When all Tricks and Evaſions ſhall be diſcovered, and fully anſwered to the Confuſion of thoſe, who make uſe of them. Men may now excuſe themſelves before their Neighbours and Acquaintance, who

know not as God knows, the very Secrets of all Hearts. The Conſideration of a Judgment to come ſhould make us ſuſpect our ſelves, for not every one that is perſwaded of his own Righteouſneſs, is accepted with God, but whom he approveth. Moſt commonly People have too haſty and good Opinion of their own Condition, they preſently think themſelves fit for Heaven, and they have an intereſt in Chriſt, and will cry out *Lord, Lord*, as if they were his own, *When he ſhall profeſs to them, I know ye not, depart from me ye that Work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 22, 23. If they do that, the Lord Jeſus will diſown, and not admit them into his Kingdom. All their falſe Thoughts will avail nothing at that time, but now they breed Unconcernedneſs and Preſumption. Men are willing to be quiet and cannot endure to be diſturbed, but let them conſider this one thing. That if they ſhould periſh by the deceiveableneſs of Satan and their own Hearts, it will be moſt ſad to think (and worſe then it is now to have their preſent eaſe interrupted) that if they had found it out, which they would not when they might, they had avoided all this Miſery. Thoſe upbraidings of paſt irrepairable Folly, will be no little Addition to it. After-Wit is never good, but in a thing of this moment, where is no poſſibility of remedying the miſtake, is more Senſeleſs and inexcuſable. *O Jeruſalem, if thou hadſt known in this thy day the things that belong to thy Peace, but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* Could we come to ſpeak with thoſe, who whilſt they lived, *walked in a way right in their own Eyes, but find the paths thereof to have lead unto Death*: How would theſe wretched Creatures accuſe themſelves for running on perfunctorily in their Courſe, without throughly conſidering whither it did tend? They would lament their Careleſsneſs, and neglect of making their Calling and Election ſure. I am perſwaded, they would teſtifie unto us to take all heed, that we be not deceived in like manner. They muſt acknowledge God righteous, for his word makes known all Errour, and would have *done good unto them, if they had walked uprightly*, Mic. 2. 7. but they did follow their own Hearts Counſel, and would have none of his, then what they did frame agreeable to their own. O that they might have another day of Grace, and Amendment of paſt miſtakes! Nothing can be granted againſt eternal and immutable Decrees. But we on this ſide of the Grave may do it; but if we will not, we ſhall paſs into the ſame Condemnation, there is no remedy, if we will not when we may, when we

1 Sam. 15. 13.

we are ſo earneſtly called upon and intreated, and ſhewed how we may eſcape. There are now abroad in the World, *Men ſporting themſelves with their own deceivings*, 2 Pet. 2. 13. Who live in ſome wickedneſs or other, and yet *paſs the time of their ſojourning without fear*; who ſtand continually at the entrance of Eternity, but take no due care leaſt the gates of Hell be opened upon them; And why ſhould any one be thought evil of, who acquaints them of their danger, that they may go further from it. As long as they are in any way of Wickedneſs, they are not in the right way; and whether ſuch will know it or no, *Thou haſt rebuked the proud that are curſed, which do err from thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119. 21.

That fancy which allows in the practice of any ſin, or which excuſes from obeying any one ſingle Goſpel Precept pertaining to ſuch a Man or Relation, is a meer deceit, and is damnable. *There are many devices in Mans heart, nevertheleſs the counſel of the Lord that ſhall ſtand*, Prov. 19. 21. People are very apt to truſt unto thoſe which concern their Spiritual Eſtate, but herein they *compaſs themſelves about with Sparks*; in this life they may walk *in the light of their fire and the ſparks that they kindled*; enjoy a little outward heat, but no ſolid warmth and comfort; have carnal ſecurity, but not *Peace towards God*: But that muſt vaniſh; upon a Death-bed they may ſee their errour, and *lie down in Sorrow*; but if ſo blinded that they cannot ſee then, they will feel, if they ſhould be let down into everlaſting fire: Why will they not in the mean while take heed to themſelves, that they be not deceived? Iſa. 50. 11.

Wherefore lay apart all filthineſs and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, and receive with meekneſs the ingrafted word which is able to ſave your Souls, Jam. 1. 21. The Scriptures (as aforeſaid) have proved an occaſion of deceits, that was when Men did abuſe and pervert them of ſet purpoſe; but if made uſe of as here directed, they do diſcover them all, and lead into the way of Truth. *Do ye not therefore err, becauſe ye know not the Scriptures?* ſaid our Lord to the Sadducees, *Mark* 12. 24. But who call themſelves his followers of the Roman Church fallaciouſly conclude; therefore Men err, becauſe they know the Scriptures: But this happens only through the abomination of the wicked, *which ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient*, 1 Pet. 2. 8. Whereas no truly honeſt minded Soul was ever deceived by it; I do not mean in every little Queſtion which Miniſters unto ſtrife rather then Godly Edifying, or in matters of doubtful diſputation; but what is neceſſary to build up

up in our holy Faith, and make for good Life. As long as we keep our heart whole with God, and continue ſtedfaſt in his Covenant, we are ſafe; but if we once let in a ſinful gain or luſt, then fooliſh imaginations come in, and we are in danger to miſcarry in the errour of our own ways. If our Selves will take heed, both pray and endeavour to hold up our goings in Gods paths, this is to keep from the paths of the deſtroyer. *If there be no wicked way in us, we ſhall be in the way everlaſting*; Thoſe which turn aſide are Sin and Satan, but this is the Covenant performed in theſe dayes; *That he would grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hands of our Enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs before him all the dayes of our Life*, Luke 1. 73, 74. It can be no little ſatisfaction to be freed from danger; and then if it be any comfort to have true quietneſs of Spirit, Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, firm hopes of Eternal Life, ſuch have all theſe. When thoſe who cheriſh themſelves with deceits, may be like the reſt of Sleep, whereof nothing is perceived but interruptions; They have no delights in the inward Man, no rejoycings in God; but feed upon groundleſs expectations, which ſhall periſh with them. *If any man think himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himſelf*; He may indeed with ſlight curſory thoughts conclude his condition to be well enough, this a ſelf deceiver may do. Whereas the true ſervant of God can deſcend into the bottom of his heart, can *prove his own work, and find rejoycing in himſelf alone*, which the other cannot: *Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatſoever a man ſoweth that he ſhall alſo reap*; *He that ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption, but he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap life everlaſting*, Gal. 6. 3, 6, 7, 8.

Many people intend well, but the Enemy doth try all means to hinder. His firſt attempt is to keep off from coming into the way of Righteouſneſs at all; but if he doth not ſucceed there, he will try to turn them aſide into the By-paths of errour or wickedneſs. Is God to be Worſhipped? He repreſents ſuch an Idolatry or Heathen Superſtition which he hath got to be retained by one half of thoſe who are called Chriſtians. Is the truth to be ſought after? There is ſuch a falſe light, go after that. Hath the Lord commanded *to do all his Statutes*, Deut. 6. 24. He knoweth ſuch a thing to be for your Happineſs, and why ſhould he reſtrain you from that? Beloved do not give credit to him, who after this manner

ner beguiled our firſt Parents, in whoſe loyns we fell, and became ſubject to all thoſe evils and dangers that now beſet us.

Submit your ſelves therefore to God: reſiſt the Devil and he will flee from you, Jam. 4. 7. Ignorant people are apt to be frightened at him, but he is a meer Coward; he cannot conquer any one unleſs he will himſelf. Though he is full of miſchief and maliciouſly ſet againſt us, yet he can do no harm unleſs our ſelves give way unto him.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh unto you, Jam. 4. 8. What a ſtir do men make, before they give up themſelves to his Obedience? How many arguments and beſeechings muſt they have? Though he is the God of their being and well-being, yet what a work is it to bring them unto his ſervice? It is their greateſt Happineſs and Security, yet with what difficulty are they perſwaded unto it? They do not think ſo, then let them conſider throughly the different ſtate of the Wicked and Godly in this World, as they are both in the ſame low degree.

Of the different ſtate of wicked and Godly

The former cares not for God, neither hath he any regard to keep his Commandments; and perhaps may think himſelf happy becauſe he is his own Man, and doth follow his own humour: Who can controul him? He is not troubled with the fears of Religion; He doth not ſtand in dread of an Oath, but loves and dares to talk big. When he can ſpare time from his work he is for any diverſion or Merriment, whether ſinful or not is no matter unto him; he lives as comfortably as he can, dies when his time is come, and there is an end of him. Pſal. 10.

But now the Lord ſaith, they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be Lightly eſteemed, 1 Sam. 2. 30. Whatever ſuch ſay in their heart concerning the holy one of *Iſrael*, they dare not talk after this rate to the Governour of their Country; and they will find that they had better curſe the King to his face, then conceive ſuch iniquity but in thought againſt the Great King of all the Earth. Foreſooth, they will not keep his Commandments; then they ſhall loſe Eternal Life, and for Diſobedience be caſt into a Furnace of Fire. Who think it ſuch an advantage to have full liberty and follow their own humour in all things, how will they like to be tied down in Chains of Darkneſs, and to pine a whole Eternity in deſires which ſhall not be granted? God will not force them, or any elſe (tho' he might) to his obedience; but will compel tranſgreſſors to undergo

dergo the ſeverity of his juſt judgment. In the midſt of ſinning they have a ſecret dread and horrour thereof, which unleſs they did endeavour to ſtifle, would be intolerable to them; let them pretend or talk what they will, or conceal it ſtill, none fear ſo much as thoſe who do not fear God. They being kept in from the World to come (wherein he will ſuffer their evil deeds no longer) only by this vail of fleſh, they are afraid of every leaſt Evil or Sickneſs which may endanger that; and yet by prophaning his Name, they increaſe their own ſad expectation: They imagine they talk big, but do not conſider he is a Great God. It is a ſad thing to conſider that an *Oſtler*, *Porter*, or other common Perſon, who dare not give a Saucy Word to their Superiours on Earth for fear of having his bones broke, yet ſhould be ſo bold with the moſt High God, who can tear him in pieces, and there is none to deliver him. If it can be no ſport or pleaſure to teaze a Lion of the Forreſt, much leſs is it after ſuch an impious manner to provoke the Lyon of the tribe of *Judah*.

For their liberty to follow all exceſs, to be drunk with good Liquor and good Company is reckoned by ſome to be worth all the luſts of the fleſh, becauſe it is of longer continuance. Yet this doth not laſt always; for labour and other affairs of life call of, they have ſome ſober times; and then what thoughts are in their mind? Call to remembrance all thy former Drunken Fits and merry Meetings, What ſatisfaction doth now remain? What pleaſure doſt thou perceive of thoſe Cups, thou haſt taken off in all thy paſt Years? In the time of Health and Enjoyment thoſe delights are vaniſhed like Smoke, and ſeem as if they had never been; much more will they appear ſo when you come to lie upon a Death-bed. Indeed you may before that have ſeveral other jovial Fellowſhips, but they will likewiſe paſs away as the former have done; all will come to an end, and there will be ſo much the more guilt to anſwer for. Several Drunkards to thy knowledge are already dead and gone, and it will be a ſad thing to be in roll of thoſe who *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 10.

The wicked Man doth falſly think that Death ſhall make an utter end of him, for as ſure as *Mat.* 25. 32. *John* 5. 28, 29. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. and all Scripture is true, ſo certainly is he deceived in his expectation; for he muſt ariſe to Judgment, and if he ſtill continueth in his hard and impenitent heart (as there are ſo many plagues and threatnings, which ſhould move him with all

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ſpeed to be converted and eſcape) he muſt remain a living Monument of Eternal Vengeance. He might all one conclude the Heavens and Earth ſhould be diſſolved, though (the Son of God except) the death of millions of millions hath not in the leaſt ſhaked them, as imagine he ſhall not come forth to a fearful Judgment. Perſwade thy ſelf what thou wilt, but as ſure as God made us, and not we our ſelves, as he hath power over us, and we once ſtand here upon the Earth, ſo certainly will he account with us for our doings in another place: Men take up with the common ſaying of Mortality, *an end and no more*, which yet is falſe as themſelves ſhall know. In this as in other things, they ſpeak according to their wiſh, and not according to their real thoughts; The ſenſual intemperate perſon would fain it might be ſo with him, that as the Beaſts die ſo he might die; who made himſelf like them in his life by having no underſtanding, by gorging with the Dog ready to the Vomit, and in his ſottiſh moodes wallowing as a Sow in the Mire, ſo he would his death might not be divided from them; for thy part, thou doſt endeavour and deſire to be like them in both: The former was in thy power, and thou didſt ſo; the latter is not, for God hath decreed otherwiſe: ſuch are to be reſerved to his juſt Judgment.

What was it for which he muſt be liable to all this? When he was in the moſt flouriſhing condition and did prove himſelf daily with Mirth, this did not ſatisfie him. His heart was dull and heavy, when he did ſeem chearful to outward appearance, he found but little ſincere joy, but few delights which were not attended with inward damp and ſorrow; if any, they were quickly over and gone. Hardly the tenth part of his ſhort life was ſpent in Jollity; for deduct Child-hood, the time of going to School, ſleep, and neceſſary buſineſs of the World, there is little remaining to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin; if conſidered ſtrictly, they do not extend to the hundredth (I ſhould not be found a great liar if I did ſay) not to the thouſandth part of our life. What a little muſt this be to loſe an intereſt in a bleſſed Eternity? The reſidue of time was ſpent in the common actions of Mankind; and theſe were the more unpleaſant to him who had not God for his portion. He did work for the belly and did eat, but was not ſatisfied in his mind, for that would be empty again; and then he muſt labour to fill it, and ſo round in a circle; He could not ſee any good or end thereof; He did not labour in hope; He could not expect to in-

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creaſe, or get higher. He toiled all his life time, and got nothing of true ſatisfaction; What profit is it to ſpend our days in Heavineſs, and after Death to look for Puniſhment? Many troubles did befall him, vexation upon vexation, ſorrow upon ſorrow, in his declining years ſeldom a day without grief or diſcontent. In the midſt whereof he cannot tell whither to reſort for true eaſe or comfort; many a ruful exclamation within himſelf: Why came I forth into the World? It had been better for me to have remained what I was an hundred years ſince, to have never ſeen the light of the living. My life is irkſome and grievous, and I know nothing to the contrary, but when I die it will be yet worſe; fain I would not live, but I fear to die. O that I might ſleep for evermore, or return into my firſt nothing, and then welcome the Grave; I would as willingly lie down there as in a bed of Roſes, but my heart can give no ſuch aſſurance: It ſeems to foreſhew more and greater miſery, when the breath is gone out of my body; I could ſometimes ſay there would be an end of me, but I tremble it will be no ſuch thing. O wretched Man that I am! Who can deliver me from preſent grief, and preſerve me from that expectation of worſe things to come?

Thus may be ſeen his ſad condition, and indeed it would make an heart of ſtone compaſſionate him, and guſh into Tears; but it is conſidered, all this is come upon him through his own fault, for his contempt and ſtubbornneſs againſt our Moſt Gracious God. Who would have brought him unto Heaven, afforded him means and power, but he did refuſe and not value them; ſaid he in his heart, wherefore ſhould I keep the Commandments? *It is vain to ſerve God*, Mal. 3. 14. I did obſerve ſeveral to go to Worſhip, and diligently frequent his Ordinances, who did *Walk mournfully before the Lord of Hoſts*; for in his Opinion they were pitiful Melancholly Souls, they got no good by it. Not diſcerning future promiſes and preſent peace, and therefore he blindly reſolved, to go on in his wonted courſe, which was all his life long to diſregard or ſhew himſelf deſpiteſully againſt the Author of his being.

But let others ſee and fear, what his ungodlineſs is come unto; If one behaves himſelf Proudly and Rebelliouſly againſt the King, who received maintenance and continual favour from him, and comes to ſuffer for it, the voice of the Multitude is, Hang him, he is an ungrateful Traytor. And then if one acts in like manner againſt God, who is loving to every Man, ſendeth Rain upon the

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juſt and unjuſt, giveth them all neceſſary temporal bleſſings, and never intendeth any hurt by whatſoever he doth during the whole day of Salvation; but ſtill they will not be intreated by loving kindneſs, nor warned by the Rod that ſtriketh to turn from their evil way, and come into Gods wayes. If theſe people become wretched through their own wilfulneſs and perverſeneſs, and if the Holy Almighty God to frighten us the more from it, and to keep up his Government, hath ordered that Miſery ſhould be linked on to iniquity, and they commit this with greedineſs; Who can be moved or find fault if they have that alſo, which is *juſtly the due reward of their deeds*, Luke 23.41. The Law is not to be blamed, but thoſe only who do not obſerve or transgreſs againſt it. Though there would have been joy among Angels and all good Men if they had repented, who would likewiſe have done any thing to bring it to paſs, and were grieved becauſe they would not ſuffer it; But ſeeing they continued obſtinate, and hardned their hearts, theſe ſhall not pity their Calamity, nor be greived when their fear cometh, which will be a further aggravation. *Many ſorrows ſhall be to the Wicked: But he that truſteth in the Lord, mercy ſhall compaſs him about*, Pſal. 32. 10.

Ezek. 14. 22, 23.

A Deſcription of a good Man.

It is a good thing to have an able friend to put confidence on in dangers and diſtreſs; but he that can ſtay himſelf on God the Rock of Ages, the Lord Almighty, is in a more happy condition then he that hath the favour of all the great Men of the World. Let the Wicked reckon it a Priviledge that they care not for God (it hath been ſhewed to be a miſerable one) but the Righteous count it their greateſt honour that *God is not aſhamed to be called their God*, Heb. 11. 16. And they poor Earth-Worms, may be ſtiled his Servants. They by Faith ſeeing him that is inviſible, who doth not deſpiſe theſe little ones, however low in the World, are rapt up with admiration; Lord! what are we, that thou ſhouldſt be mindful of us? For conſider how great he muſt be, who made the World and all things therein; how Glorious, whoſe is the Sun and Brightneſs thereof. Others may go and pleaſe themſelves with their acquaintance with Lords and Gentlemen, but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God; who humbleth himſelf to behold the things in Heaven and Earth, yet admits us to come boldly to the Throne of Grace, to preſent our Petitions, which he will grant if he knoweth what is good for us better then

we our ſelves, ſees it profitable for us. Thoſe of Authority in this World ſay to thoſe under them, go, and he goeth, come, and he cometh, to this Man, do this, and he doth it; much more may the Lord and Governour of the whole World, unto whom the Nations of the Earth are as the drop of a Bucket, command us to do whatſoever pleaſeth him. But as he is Powerful, ſo he is Merciful; he hath ſhewed what he doth require of us, cauſed it to be noted in a Book that it may be for the time to come for ever, and hath *teſtified that no Man add unto theſe things*, Rev. 22. 18. So we are not left at an uncertainty how we may, or when we have done the will of God, if we are in a readineſs ſtill to hear all things that are commanded and made known from his Word. Here-
Acts 10. 33. in we are more happy, then thoſe little Spirits who endeavour to pleaſe Men, for their humours are uncertain, not eaſily known, and endleſs.

There is a delight in approaching to God; thoſe rejoycings which the devout Soul hath, ſeem ſtrange to the unexperienced, for they make no outward noiſe, yet are as real as ſenſual pleaſures to Worldly Men. *He calls the Sabbath a delight, not doing his own Ways, nor finding his own Pleaſure, nor ſpeaking his own Words*, Iſa. 58. 13. It is the moſt pleaſant day of all the Week; rejoycing at this time of Vacation from worldly cares and labour, but more eſpecially becauſe he can wait on the Lord in the Sanctuary; hear his Word: When he comes home, he is better pleaſed with good Conference, Prayer, Reading and Meditation, then others are in vain Talk, wretched Idleneſs, or Recreations; for to them ſucceed Heavineſs in that they have not done what they ſhould. But with a good Man the day ends in Satisfaction, that he hath done his duty by rightly uſing the means of Grace; he hath laid up in the Treaſure of his Heart ſome good things, which may carry him through Temptation, and give comfort the week following. He hath refreſhed himſelf from bodily labour, ſo he can fall to it again more cheerfully; The goodneſs of God is here to be obſerved, how *the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath*, Mark 2. 27. For if he were to labour every day, it would be intolerable and irkſome: But now it is not, becauſe a day of reſt returns ſo often, which alſo takes off from the tediouſneſs of the Year. Since it is thus ordained, the time of Mans labour paſſeth on more comfortably; and there is more variety: in the week he is cumbred about getting neceſſaries for this miſe-

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rable and tranſitory life; on the Lords day he provides for an Happy and Eternal being. How contentedly doth he go to bed that night with the Memory of what he hath thrived in? *The merchandize of which is better then the Merchandize of Silver*, Prov. 3. 14.

The next Morning he goes forth ively land willingly to the work of his Calling, which he follows with honeſty and diligence. The juſt Man walketh in his Integrity, doth not fear to ſee any, for he hath wronged none, hath a good Report and Commendation among his Neighbours, and they being aſſured of his Faithfulneſs are willing to deal with him, ſo he hath greater Cuſtom and Employment. There are opportunities when he might get more if he would Lye, Circumvent, or take advantage over an ignorant Perſon; but he will not for that loſe his preſent Peace and future Reward. *He that getteth Riches, and not by right, ſhall leave them in the midſt of his days, and at his end ſhall be a Fool*, Jer. 17. 11. He ſhall now have no true Comfort of them, and there will be a worſe conſequent hereafter But for him, *That walketh righteouſly and ſpeaketh uprightly, he deſpiſeth the Gains of oppreſſion, He ſhall dwell on high, his place of defence ſhall be the munitions of Rocks, bread ſhall be given him, his waters ſhall be ſure*, Iſa. 33. 15, 16. He ſhall come to Heaven, his Habitation ſhall be in the place of the Moſt High, and in the mean while ſhall be ſure of a Livelihood. God hath ordained, *The juſt ſhall live by Faith*, Hab. 2. 4. Not ſerve him for Siniſter Reſpects or preſent Ends: Yet they have ſufficient, and God ſweetens it as much to them, as thoſe who have abundance and Variety of Meat, Drink and Raiment. *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God accepteth thy Works*, Eccleſ. 9 7. Whatever thy Fare be, take it with a contented mind. for he is well-pleaſed with thy doings; feed on with Comfort, for he ſanctifieth it to thee. Is thy Bread courſe? Thou haſt an healthy good Stomach, and be ſatisfied for a little while, *Thou art called unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb*, Rev. 19. 9. Is thy Liquor ſmall? Yet quench thy thirſt therewith at preſent, *For ye are not as yet come to the reſt, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you*, Deut. 12. 9. Thou ſhalt drink new Wine in his Kingdom; *Thou ſhalt eat the labour of thine hands, happy ſhalt thou be, and it ſhall be well with thee; Thy wife ſhall be as a fruitful Vine by the ſide of thine Houſe, thy Children like Olive Branches round about thy Table,*

Table, Pſal. 128. 2, 3. There is unexpreſſible comfort in conjugal Love, when others in unlawful Mixtures meet with nothing but Repentance and Loathſomeneſs: and then his Children are more dear to him, then the ſeed of the Adulterer, Sons of Whoredom, or of thoſe vileſt Men, who are *without natural affection*, Rom. 1. 31.

Ezek. 16. 45.

Who is thus bleſſed at Home, doth not ſo much reſort forth to the Ale-Houſe; He doth not wring tears from his Family leaſt he ſhould bring them to a morſel of Bread, neither doth he ſpend that for himſelf which they want; indeed he hath as much liberty and right to good Drink as others, which he accordingly receives with Moderation, and ſo hath more enjoyment of it; *for he hath all the pleaſure, but none of the ſin and inconvenience, which attend thoſe who add Drunkenneſs to Thirſt.* They for the time forget their cares and miſery, which are either regrets of Conſcience, or misfortunes of the World; but our good Man hath not the firſt, as for the latter he can comfort and remedy himſelf a better way. He can truſt in God, have recourſe to his Word, pacifie himſelf with faith and hope of better things to come, look upon the example of Saints heretofore; from hence ſprings up greater and more enduring comfort, then from the ſparklings of Wine or heavineſs of Ale.

He hath an excellent end to himſelf in what he doth; for he labours to eat, and he eats to live, and he lives to know and ſerve the Lord, which tends toward the receiving (according to his gracious Promiſes) Eternal Glory and Reward. If he doth now find wearineſs in work, it ſhall not be ſo always, *the times of refreſhing will come*; This life was not given to follow after eaſe and pleaſure, and though the practice of ſeveral ſeems to the contrary, yet they may come to affirm, it would have been better for them if they had taken the ſame honeſt pains, as themſelves ſaw others did. God will not forget the labour and care of ſome who had juſt food and raiment; or not conſider the Jollity and Wantonneſs of others who did neither Sow nor Spin, yet devoured the fatneſs of the Earth, and were arrayed in the beſt apparel. All things will be ſet aright at the laſt; the very reflection or looking back (if nothing more be added) when they are both paſt will ſet them equal; for what difference is between him who had a pleaſant or troubleſome Voyage when over? It will be an addition to the happineſs of Heaven, the more tribulation one comes

comes out of from the World. Let the mean perſon be ſure to abound in love and zeal for God, it ſhall go as well with him at laſt as with his rich Neighbours; there is not ſuch a vaſt difference (as ſome would be apt to think) between his and their preſent contentment; if any exceeding, upon the ſtrict ſurvey, it may be found of his ſide. That Man is moſt happy, who is ſo at the end.

Every Sun-ſetting ſets him one ſtep further, to Day more then Yeſterday; to Morrow he comes yet more nigh. He goes on from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one Feſtival to another towards the place of Eternal Reſt and Rejoycing. *He confeſſes himſelf to be a Stranger and Pilgrim upon Earth, and declares plainly that he ſeeks a Country*, Heb. 11. 13, 14. Not that which he is in already, for he muſt not continue herein; and therefore deſires a more laſting Country; let others do what they will, for his part he will make it the greateſt and only buſineſs of his life to get thither. The bare hopes whereof do yield him mighty ſupport under the moſt heavy and weariſome labours; theſe will be ended and the Angels ſhall carry him into *Abraham* Boſome, a place of ſweet repoſe: When he comes upon the Bed of laſt Sickneſs, he ſhall reſt thereon. Being aſſured he is going into a better State, he can lye down in quietneſs and have rejoycing within, when the outward Man is giving up the Ghoſt: That God whom he hath ſincerely ſerved throughout his life, will deal bountifully with him at laſt. *Well done good and faithful Servant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

What were his paſt ſervices to be ſo highly commended by our God? His only Son was pleaſed to ſay, *Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit*, John 15. 8. Lord thou haſt but what is thine own, from thee alone did proceed what thou graciouſly vouchſafeſt to accept. He gives grace to enable us here, and rewards with glory hereafter; Who can ſufficiently admire his love and goodneſs? He might have commanded us to go through Fire and Water, to have done ſome hard thing before we ſhould arrive at his Kingdom; but he hath brought us into a wealthy place, where we enjoyed inward peace of mind, and had all things neceſſary for our bodies, where we did meet with but little evil and hardſhip, not worthy to be accounted ſo. What is become of that light affliction which was for a Moment, now we are poſſeſt of the exceeding and eternal weight of Glory? How ſlender a mat-

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ter is the denial of a luſt or croſſing a corrupt inclination, ſeeing we are entred into life, and enjoy as great Happineſs as the powers of Soul are capable of receiving? *Truly God is good to* Iſrael, *even to ſuch as are of a clean heart*, Pſal 73. 1. He is loving to every Man, but the greateſt part did reject his goodneſs; What Enemies were they to themſelves? But bleſſed are thoſe who did not forſake their God as the wicked do. Whither ſhould we have went but unto him, who then held forth the Words of Eternal Life, and now gives the thing it ſelf? When we were in the Wilderneſs, he was our Guide and Comfort in the Way. Others catcht at every thing they found there, and could not be ſatisfied; whilſt we uſed it as we paſſed through, did thank our God he made it ſo commodious to ſojourn in, but did not take up our reſt there, for we believed God had provided better things; We fully truſted unto what ſome did only make a reſerve of, and therefore would make ſure of the Wordly happineſs (O wonderful wiſe in their own Opinion!) and accordingly did run after every trifle, ſnatch at every thing goodly to behold; did tear their fleſh with thornes and briers, walked through deſerts, and wandred out of the way, and ſo miſſed of the place to which thoſe who had faith are arrived. It will be more Happineſs to the bleſſed Spirits in Heaven to remember that they came thither with more eaſe and leſs trouble, then thoſe accurſed Souls did find in the way which led to Hell; which conſideration will be a greater degree of torment to them. This is true of all ſorts and conditions of Men from the higheſt to the loweſt; whatever rank they ſtand in the World, it is their greateſt happineſs to fear God and keep his Commandments, then which what more forcible Exhortation can be deſired to perſwade Men? For the very ſame doth prevail as to all other things.

Deut. 32. 20.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

A Survey in General of thoſe ſins which hinder the Happineſs of Mankind, as contrary to Scripture, and from the very nature of Things.

HItherto hath been ſhewed out of Gods Word what is required of Man in every ſtate and condition, and what is moſt for his own Happineſs. Nothing can be done too much to further this great end; and therefore it is neceſſary to proceed unto the diſcovery of thoſe things, which promiſe and make a ſhew of Happineſs, but in truth hinder from obtaining. Every ſingle perſon propoſes to himſelf ſome Felicity, which is the end of his Actions: Now the miſtake is, wherein this Happineſs of Man is placed; Whether in obedience to Gods Commandments; or taking the full of the things of this World, following his own inclinations and humours.

God hath given Laws to his Creatures, the tranſgreſſion of which is Sin. As ſoon as the World was peopled, *the Wickedneſs of Man was great in the Earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually: for all fleſh had corrupted his way upon the Earth.* Gen. 6. 5, 12. Evil hath interwoven it ſelf into every particle of his Nature; he is become ſtrangely in love therewith, not knowing or rather not minding that like a ſweet Poyſon cauſes Sickneſs and Death, ſo this brings Miſery and Ruine: The fault is wholly in himſelf, for he will be ignorant; Love is blind according to the Proverb, and alſo it prejudices. The reſolution is not to part with, and ſo ſhuts the Eyes, ſtops the Ears, not ſuffering himſelf to be perſwaded of its Deformity and Miſchief; Sin hath ſtole away the hearts of the Men of this World, it kiſſes and flatters, inſinuating what a deal of good it will do them, what pleaſure it affords.

By one Man sin entred into the World, Rom. 5. 12. It prevailed upon him after such a colloguing and creeping manner; We may blame our Fore-Father for putting the Seeds of evil in, but yet by the assistance given us, we may stop the growth thereof. Sin hath this Advantage, that it hath taken Root, and hath one part, even our dear flesh to side with it: Which as so much dung and soil makes it shoot forth abundantly, yet still as it appears above ground we may cut it off. And if we alwayes keep it thus short, it may indeed and will somewhat trouble us as long as we remain in this sinful Earth, but it will not overcome or triumph over us. *Let not sin reign in your Mortal Body*, Rom. 6. 12. The Apostle well knew what he said in calling it a Mortal Body; If absolutely without sin, it could not be Mortal, for Death is by reason of Sin: But he further explains himself, *verse* 14. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.* 'Tis the Dominion and Power of sin which is really and finally hurtful; from that any one may be freed who will come unto Christ. *Without me ye can do nothing*, John 15. 5. And again, *We can do all things through Christ that strengtheth us*, Phil. 4. 13. Men are naturally apt to give back, yea, and corruption hath so weakned them that they cannot go unto him; *No Man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him*, John 6. 44. And if any will seek unto God for this purpose, he will powerfully move and incline them to be followers after Christ: When one is brought over to a thing with great striving and unwillingness, it is a common saying that he is compelled, though at last he yields to it freely; compare *Mat.* 22. with *Luke* 14. 23. And so God doth work by his Spirit upon the untoward hearts of Men; He gives Grace, and corruption is there also, and these struggle together within the Man. Though corruption hath the start of being there before, and doth influence; yet Grace follows close at the heel, *hath power with God, and with Men, and will prevail.* But the Question is with which the Man will side and take part; whether he will *work together with the Grace of God*, or yield to his own corruptions, and so receive that in vain. 2 Cor. 6. 1. He cannot be neuter or unconcerned, for the War is within him, and it is here as between the house of *David* and *Saul*; the one grows stronger and stronger, the other weaker and weaker according to the single Victories one hath over the other. *To him that hath shall be given*, who useth well shall have more; but who doth

doth not, from him ſhall be taken away that which he hath. An old hardned Sinner bred up in ungodlineſs from his Youth, is as awkward to Prayer or good Duties, as a ſtone to flie upwards; yet in his life time paſt had Diſpoſition and Power to do thoſe things, unto which now he is averſe. So he who hath little and few good motions, yet if he doth cherith and comply with theſe from time to time, he will have them greater and more impulſive; The Spirit of God is a delicate thing, and cannot endure to be *vexed:* who *rebell* againſt its dictates and thwart its deſires, do provoke him to with-draw. What paſſionate intreaties doth he make to reclaim ſinners? *O! that my people had hearkened unto me, and* Iſrael *had walked in my wayes*, Pſal. 81. 13. *Yea, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving-kindneſs have I drawn thee*, Jer. 31. 3. Some are moved by this, and others are of ſuch baſe nature as to reſiſt it. *And the Spirit, and the Bride ſay, Come; and let him that heareth ſay, come; and let him that is A-thirſt, come, and whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely*, Rev. 22. 17. Here is Conſcience, Chriſt, his Miniſters, the want and deſire of good and comprehenſively all other motives which invite; but none is forced for all. Iſa. 63. 10.

If they will come, they ſhall be kindly received; but if they make light of all theſe Meſſengers, going their Wayes one to his Farm, another to his Merchandize, at their peril be it. The reaſon why they did, *Mat.* 22. was becauſe they had ſome preſent buſineſs which they thought of more concern then the Wedding Dinner: In like manner Men will not entertain the offers of Grace and Salvation made to them out of the Goſpel, becauſe they have ſome luſts and covetous deſires to gratifie, which they think tend more to their Happineſs, then the others. That theſe have ſome delight they are ſure, for they have it in hand, but they cannot conceive any in the other, it is to be revealed hereafter they know not when; ſo in their Opinion they make the better choice, becauſe they are certain of ſomething, whereas others expoſe themſelves to ſelf-denial and preſent loſſes, and live upon imaginary expectancies. There is no time like the preſent; a ſlight vanity now is to be prefered before a ſubſtantial Glory hereafter. Moſt excellent reaſoning! and agreeable *to the Wiſdom of this World, that come to nought*, 1 Cor. 2. 6. It is worthy of, and ſuch as could be expected from Men who have no foreſight of things to come: in other things it is prudence to

have an eye forward, but in this (which is of greater Moment then all things put together) *to pass on and be punished* is reckoned the wiser way. Then it will be discerned otherwise, but this is the misery when they shall come to be throughly convinced of their foolishness, it will be past remedy. This objection against the things of God because they are to come, hath been already answered; And for the delight of the sins most in esteem and practice (if God permit) shall be fully examined in the ensuing Chapters. It may appear very small and inconsiderable, for which a Man must lose Temporal Comfort and Eternal Joyes, endure the manifold evils and inconveniencies of sin in this present time, and afterwards suffer endless Torment. To be excluded from Peace here, and Glory hereafter; to be made subject unto sorrows now, and hence forwards Eternal anguish of mind, must be prejudicial to Mans Happiness, or nothing is.

Ch. 3.

All this is to lay stronger engagement on us to observe Gods Laws; *In keeping of them there is great reward*, Psal. 19. 11. There is happiness to be found; but in transgression is exceeding punishment, there only misery is felt. The way of God is a way of Peace, as long as any one walks therein he is safe, but if he turns his foot aside, he presently falls into trouble and danger. Obedience and Happiness are met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other: As again, Sin and Misery are coupled, Wickedness and Punishment are joyned hand in hand.

Of Scripture.

The Heavens declare the Glory of God: and the Firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto Day uttereth Speech, Night unto Night sheweth Knowledge. There is no Speech nor Language, where their voice is not heard; Psal. 19. 1, 2, 3. The astonishing Works of creation proclaim aloud to all the World, there is a God who made them: The excellent contrivance of this glorious Fabrick, doth shew forth his great Power and infinite Understanding. But they do not make known what the Lord requireth of us; they do not reveal in what relation we stand towards him, they cannot discover our imperfection, or how we may please and become like unto him; they do not shew the errour of our crooked and perverse wayes, or manifest the true Happiness, or how we may run towards it, and not at uncertainty: Neither doth they prescribe how to remedy our natural folly and blindness. *But the Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul: the Testimony of the Lord is sure*

ſure, making wiſe the ſimple. *The Statutes of the Lord are right rejoicing the Heart: The Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the Eyes.* It doth what all the World cannot, direct into the way of perfect Peace, which leads up to everlaſting Glory.

The Prophecy came not in Old time by the Will of Man, but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt, 2 Pet. 1. 21. *God who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son*, Heb. 1. 1, 2. Who whilſt he dwelt amongſt us, made known the Will of his heavenly Father, chuſing unto him Diſciples to go and teach likewiſe. He inſtructed them until the time of his Suffering: *To whom he ſhewed himſelf alive after his Paſſion by many infallible Proofs, being ſeen of them forty days, and ſpeaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. And being aſſembled together with them, commanded that they ſhould not depart from* Jeruſalem, *but wait for the Promiſe of the Father, which ſaith he, ye have heard of me*, Acts 1. 3. 4. It was the *Comforter, which is the holy Ghoſt, whom my Father will ſend in my Name, he ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatſoever I have ſaid unto you*, John 14. 26. Many things Chriſt did and ſaid, which are not written by the Evangeliſts, ſome whereof the Apoſtles have delivered. And other things they have laid down out of his Doctrine by infallible inference and deduction. They could not be miſtaken, for they received the Promiſe, *John* 16. 13. *The Spirit of Truth will guide you into all Truth*; and for a manifeſt Teſtimony thereof, they foretold things to come, which have been, and are to be fulfilled.

In the old Teſtament *the Law of Moſes*, the *Prophets*, and the *Pſalms* ſo ſummed up, *Luke* 24. 44. In the New, the Writings of *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles* are given to make us wiſe unto Salvation. By theſe God will judge us at the laſt day. *I ſaw the Dead ſmall and great ſtand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which was the Book of Life, and the Dead were judged out of thoſe things, which were written in the Books according to their Works*, Rev 20. 12. The Bible is the Lords Statute Book containing thoſe Laws for the Government of the world, and according as People have obſerved or tranſgreſſed them, he will proceed to acquital, or Condemnation.

In Chriſt's Sermon on the Mount, before he comes to ſpeak as to the Commandments, he doth premiſe: *Think not that I am come*

to

to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill: For verily I say unto you, till Heaven & Earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled, Mat. 5. 17, 18. As for the Types and Ceremonies they were but Prefigurations of him that was to come, so they vanish when all was finished on the Cross. Other Statutes did relate to the Jews in their politick capacity, which *Moses* did ordain from God, who
1 Sam. 8. 7. was to them immediately instead of a Temporal King and Lawgiver. He was pleased to be over that Nation in a more especial manner, though he was Lord over the whole World. But the other part was for the Government of mens Life and Actions concerning Good and Evil, teaching them their duty to God, and one another: which remains still in full force. Christ did vindicate and clear the Law from those corrupt Interpretations and narrow Restrictions the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had invented. He introduces it, *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the* Scribes *and* Pharisees, *ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And then he doth explain the true meaning and full extent of the Commandments. He hath also filled up the Defects and Imperfections of the Law, hath rendred it holy and spiritual. By making more known how it did reach the inward man, was a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the Heart: for out of that did proceed the things which defile the man, and therefore should be rightly ordered. He enjoyned Purity and Sincerity of Heart, which in Scripture language signifies the Spirit or Soul, with all its Operations and Faculties, the whole man. Indeed the same was required of old; but then both Priest and People did draw near to God with their Lips, placing all their Religion in outward Performances, (the like mistake is too common in these days) against which the Prophets in sundry places boldly declare the Word of God, for which faithful dealing they were stoned, killed, sawed asunder, and their Writings were not much hearkned unto; for the rebellious People were resolved to go on in their course. There was no Prophet among them for four hundred Years before the coming of Christ, in which space the *Jewish* Nation had corrupted their Way, and those intrusted to preach *Moses* and the Prophets, proved most unfaithful; for by their own Traditions they made the Commandments of God of none effect. But he hath restored again the true Doctrine and incorrupted Word of God, and hath rescued many poor and ignorant

norant Souls from blind Leaders. This was one end of Christ's coming into the World, but the principal one was of offering his Soul a sacrifice for Sin, and establishing a more gracious Covenant, as is particularly set forth in the Gospel.

Thou art the God that doſt Wonders, thou haſt declared thy ſtrength among the People; thou haſt with thine Arm redeemed thy People, the Sons of Jacob *and* Joſeph, *Pſal.* 77. 14. 15, These things thou didſt of Old; but ſince thou haſt magnified thy power by *Jeſus of* Nazareth, *a man approved of God by Miracles, and Wonders, and Signs, which God did by him* (and as a further Confirmation of all) *God hath raiſed him up, having loſed the Pains of Death,* Acts 2. 22, 24. *And declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holineſs, by the Reſurrection from the Dead,* Rom. 1. 4. Thereby witneſſing all which he ſaid was true. And now having done ſo great things for us, whereof we rejoyce, he is pleaſed not to multiply Miracles. It is his decree *we ſhould walk by Faith,* and not by ſight, and we have ſufficient for the eſtabliſhment of that. It was the ſaying of Father *Abraham, If they hear not* Moſes *and the Prophets*; but now ſince the Author of the New Teſtament hath ſuffered, and that is become of force by his death, it may be added, *If they hear not Chriſt and his Apoſtles, neither will they be perſwaded, though one roſe from the dead,* Luke 16. 31. For this would not be half ſo wonderful as what they did; and if men will not be perſwaded by what is greater, if they will not believe ſo many ſtrange Works, and ſuch a cloud of Witneſſes, above five hundred Brethren at once, which had ſeen Chriſt after he was riſen, neither will they give credit unto a ſingle Perſon that came from the Grave and teſtified of theſe things. Men are apt to think and with in their Hearts, that they had greater Evidence and full Aſſurance that theſe things are ſo; but that cannot well be, unleſs the fore-mentioned Decree is reverſed, and we did now ſee the things of Heaven with open face. God is not ſuch, as he ſhould lye or repent; neither will he falſify and bring to nought his wiſe Counſels and Deſigns, to gratifie the unreaſonable deſire of ſinful men. We are to be thankful that he hath been pleaſed to reveal himſelf thus far, and not as an evil Generation to ſeek yet a ſign, when no ſign ſhall be given, ſaving that of the everlaſting Goſpel. He hath ordered it to be preached *unto all Nations for a witneſs unto them,* which carries with it ſufficient Evidence for convincing all mankind, and to leave them

without

without excuſe. We ought to reſt ſatisfied, now himſelf hath given the final peremptory Rule. *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned*, Mark 16. 16. John 3. 36. Whether men believe the Goſpel or not, they ſhall be judged by it: Let not this be thought hard, for God hath power over men; however, there is ſuch certainty in the things contained therein, that People cannot do otherwiſe then believe them, unleſs they renounce even common underſtanding. But they are become corrupt and perverſe by Luſts, which make them unwilling to believe: They would not have God reign over them, and therefore will not receive for truth what he hath revealed. *He that believeth not God, hath made him a Liar, becauſe he believeth not the Record that God gave of his Son*, 1 John 5. 10. God by the puniſhment he will inflict on ſuch, will manifeſt that he is no Lyar, but what he hath ſaid will perfrom to the utmoſt.

What is it that moves deſpicable Creatures to offer ſuch an affront to the Moſt High God? Only gratifying of paltry Luſts, or a Baſe Intereſt; which hath ſo bewitched them, that they cannot endure any thing which contradicts it. And the Goſpel commanding the denial of them, which is enforced with Rewards to the Obedient, and Threatnings to thoſe that will not comply, upon this Reaſon ſome being reſolved to keep to their own wicked inclinations, they ſhew malice againſt it: they will not believe, leſt they ſhould be induced to obey; and thus they provoke the author thereof. But let theſe men know, Greater is he whoſe Word it is, then themſelves who will give no credit thereunto. As he is the *Lord our Righteouſneſs*, Jer. 33. 16. ſo will he be the *Lord taking Vengeance*, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 8. He hath given a gracious Law; ſo likewiſe he hath annexed Severity towards thoſe who will not obſerve it. They had need be well aſſured that thoſe things which make a ſeparation between God and themſelves, do counterpoize the loſs of his goodneſs and favour, and make amends for the power of his anger: But are they equivalent to the leaſt of his Mercies? Or will they take off the ſmart, when his Wrath is kindled but a little? They ſhould fully conſider, whether thoſe things God forbids, and they will do, can yield them more contentment and ſatisfaction in proportionable degree and duration, then the things he commands, and they refuſe; otherwiſe their Diſobedience will be moſt unreaſonable and fooliſh: for they

loſe

loſe exceeding and eternal happineſs, and expoſe themſelves to the like miſery. Certainly all the Enjoyments of this preſent time cannot make recompence for the torments to be revealed hereafter; but what if it ſhould be ſaid further? The pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon, even whilſt that ſeaſon is, do deprive of greater happineſs then they bring; and men are made more miſerable by them. In the very time they are ſo eagerly followed and had, it would be better if the man had not uſed them. If it can be made evidently to appear that living according to the Goſpel renders more happy in this Life, then taking the full ſwinge of Licentiouſneſs; and beſides, there is the conſideration of a different futurity, then it will be clearly demonſtrated, that there's no ſuch Fool as the Sinner. And God is moſt gracious in providing ſo well for mankind; and they *without cauſe* are malicious, evil, imprudent and ſtubborn, in not complying with his Grace and Goodneſs. With the greateſt Reaſon and Equity, *Judgments are prepared for Scorners, and Stripes for the back of Fools*, Prov. 19. 29. What more could have been done to bring men unto Heaven, then by ſo ordering the matter that they ſhall be more happy in going the way to it, then they could in the broad way that leads to deſtruction? Pſal. 25. 3.

Here a doubt may ariſe, from being thus differently named, *Mat.* 7. 13, 14. They are thus called by reaſon of the difficulty of the one, and out of obſervation and prophetick foreſight that it hath, and will have ſo few Travellers until the time of univerſal Reformation ſpoken of, *Iſa.* 60. 15, 21, 22. And the other becauſe of its eaſineſs at firſt, and thoſe many who walk therein. Now it doth not follow, becauſe a thing is more eaſie, it is more ſatisfying; for then ſlothful Perſons would be more happy then thoſe who undertake good and noble deſigns, which are attended with difficulty. Since our Nature is ſo much depraved by the fall, we ſhould of our ſelves ſlide down inſenſibly into Hell: And that ſaying of our Lord, *Mat.* 7. 13. *Luke* 13. 24 doth reſpect us as we are in our natural condition; for we muſt put forth ſtrength to go upwards to the holy Hill. It is ſaid, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate* (the Word imports exerting the utmoſt might) but no mention is made of ſuch exceeding ſtriving when one is in. It is indeed called the *narrow Way*, but *the way of the Righteous is made plain*, Prov. 15. 19. And one may better travel in a Road incloſed of both ſides, then thoſe *who ſtumble in their wayes*

from the ancient Paths in a way not cast up, Jer. 18. 15. *Or in those crooked Paths, which whosoever goeth in shall not know Peace*, Isa. 59. 8. Or who wander over Mountains, Rocks and Deserts, where lies no way; these meet with greater Hardship, Danger, and uncertainty at long run.

The great difficulty and unpleasantness is in coming into the way of the Lord; in passing by the other (which is crowded with so many Gallants, and a great multitude of all sorts, which also hath a shew of smoothness) and making choice of this which at first seems rugged, a dry Ground, and nothing of invitation therein. The Devil makes big and noble Promises of what he will give to those who serve him. All the Pleasure and Contentment in the World, this they shall have presently, and not tarry for it. When the Son of Man comes, *He hath no Form or Comliness, and when we shall see him there is no Beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our Faces from him*, Isa. 53. 2, 3. We do not at first discover any Loveliness in him, there is no external Pomp or Greatness, nor outward shew to ravish our Eyes. He is laughed at in the World, and we are apt to be ashamed of him. Such we should be our selves, look pitiful and little not worthy to be accounted of. And then he makes no such Proffers of present advantage, but Talks of Self-denial, cutting of ones right hand, hating Father and Mother, and abundance of hard sayings; so that who would come unto him? If we were to confer with Flesh and Blood, that is for present ease: And will not admit what is in the least harsh and irksome. Yet if we would consult with the Spirit of our Minds, which can try and foresee things; which willingly submits to a less trouble, for Attainment of a greater good, and avoiding a worse Evil: Which doth not judge according to appearance, but righteous Judgment; which looks upon so much boasting and pretending as the usual Concomitants of Emptiness and Deceit: On the other hand spies out a great deal of Excellency under a little outward shew. Which is apt to suspect those, who make large Promises, and gives Credit when no more is promised then will be certainly performed. Such an one will go after Christ; He speaks in a modest way: *Come unto me all ye that Labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and*

and you ſhall find reſt to your Souls, Mat. 11. 28, 29. Only Reſt, the eaſineſs of a Yoke and Lightneſs of a burden may ſeem but ſmall things in Compariſon to thoſe offered on the other hand; for there is one holds forth a Marvellous Lightſomeneſs, and Cheerfulneſs of mind to them who are melancholy and ſad. If they come unto him, he will not bring them at all into Subjection or Bondage: Nothing ſhall be laid on their Necks, yet their Souls ſhall enjoy all Happineſs, his Service is pleaſant and eaſie. He is wonderful frank, he is for giving at one time *all the Kingdoms of the World and Glory of them.* But ſtop,---Do they all make good that Satisfaction, which mankind ſo eagerly deſire, and the Deceiver ſo much boaſts of? Do they ſet at Liberty, or the more bring into Bondage? For all the high Talk of him, who was a Lyar from the beginning, thoſe ſeeming little and Contemptible offers of our Lord and Saviour, do exceed all his. That Joy, Peace, and ſubſtantial Bleſſedneſs Chriſt gives unto his Servants, may appear more excellent; then all thoſe Pleaſures and lying Vanities with which Satan beguiles his followers. Perhaps he hath the advantage at the beginning, but not at long run; his Proſelites ſeem jocund and brisk at firſt, but they are not ſo always. And if the Servant of the Moſt High God is dull and heavy at firſt ſetting out, neither ſhall he be ſo always. His joy increaſes, but the other decreaſes. He daily finds more and more Peace, the other Confuſion and Reſtleſsneſs. The one makes continual approaches to the place of Bleſſedneſs and Refreſhment; the other day by day is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned. The one makes further diſcovery of the Beauty of Holineſs, and perceives more Satisfaction ariſing from it; the other is convinced of the Loathſomeneſs and Deceitfulneſs of Sin, and waxes miſerable by ſad diſappointments. The more Zealous one is for God and his Commandments, he hath full meaſure of Joy and Comfort; but who is greedy after wickedneſs, finds Grief and Vexation. The flaſhes of ſinful Delight end in darkneſs, leave Horror and Miſery behind. The baits of the Tempter are exactly fitted to beguil Fools, having a fine appearance outwards, but within lies Poiſon and Deceit. They afford ſome Pleaſure, but it is Paltry ſudden and unſatisfying. A little Delight doth bereave of a far greater good; it doth Tickle, but it is in order to catch and deſtroy. Yea that Gratification is ſo ſhort and inconſiderable, that a Wiſe Man

Prov. 1. 31.

would not esteem of it, if without dreadful consequents hereafter. How much more should one refrain, seeing they are contrary to the Divine Law, and *for which things sake the wrath of God cometh upon the Children of disobedience*, Col. 3. 6. As such they are chiefly prejudicial to our Happiness; they are likewise so in their very Nature, making a shew of Good, but do not perform any such thing. Of this sort are those *Lusts of the Flesh and desires of the the mind*, Eph. 2. 3. Properly called, *Deceitful Lusts*, Eph. 4. 22. which the whole World run gazing after, esteeming them as the only excellent things upon Earth. They are contrary to the Gospel, and expressly forbidden under pain of Damnation; yet these are sought after and entertained, as if they had all good, and no evil in them. As if God, had been injurious and would
Gen. 31. 6. deprive them of the things which are for their Happiness; and therefore they will not obey him: For why should he with-hold the only good things? They will not be kept off by him. But O Stubborn and perverse Souls! as he is a most Sovereign Lord, may he not do what he will to try our Obedience? Hath he not provided sufficiently for the welfare of Mankind, in the lawful Enjoyment of those good things he hath given us? Hath he not prescribed a more excellent way in receiving his Creatures, then in running to the full Excess of Riot? Doth he Command any thing which is Evil? or require you to abstain from any thing really profitable for you? He hath prepared for the Sons of Men Glory and Happiness; and may he not take what ways his Wisdom thinks fit to bring them thither? He hath ordained it may be well with them whilst in the way, if they will do according to his Directions; which are better then their own imaginations. *O ye Sons of Men, how long will ye turn my Glory into Shame? How long will ye love Vanity, and seek after leasing?* Psal. 4. 2. How long will ye run after those delectable things, which do not profit, which are empty, and do not fill? Why will ye gather single straws and poor parcels of delight? Whereas if you would go unto God, you shall come again rejoycing, *bringing your sheaves with you*. Come near and behold, they are not altogether so good, which you greedily catch after; look thoroughly, the works of the flesh are not all glorious within; so neither the lust of the Eyes, or Pride of Life. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good?* Psal. 4. 6. If their hearts are not covered over with fatness, and they have not put out the light of their understanding, they may conceive more in the

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light of the Lords countenance, then others do find in the increaſe and full enjoyment of *their Corn and Wine.*

CHAP. VII.

Of GLUTTONY and DRUNKENNESS.

BEcauſe general Diſcourſes are *as words ſpoken into the Air*, 1 Cor. 14. 9. Which fl, over and touch no re; therefore it is neceſſary to explain even common things. *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfetting*, Luke 21. 34. When ſo much is received in that it doth oppreſs the Stomach and more then it will conveniently bear, that is certain Gluttony. Or when a Man is rendred indiſpoſed for Buſineſs and Action, that he cannot ſo well perform either: This ſin is not ſo diſcernable to others, for only the Man himſelf knows the meaſure of his own Appetite; and one may lawfully eat the ſame quantity which would be exceſs in another. The nature of ſin is fixed and unalterable, God knoweth it, as alſo it is ſet down in his Word, and Application may be made thereof to every Man by the Spirit of his own Mind. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. What is not for this end, is evil: We are to eat ſo far as to refreſh and ſtrengthen Nature, that we may be more enabled for Gods Service; but if on the contrary we become after our Meals more unfit for his Worſhip, (as it is with too many on the Lords day) or the ſeveral duties of our calling, then we have ſinned and done wickedly. If we grow ſenſual minded and hankering after good Victuals as to place more delight there, then in God and the things pertaining to him; this is a grievous Evil and abominable Idolatry. Of ſuch the Apoſtle *tell us Weeping, that they are Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt, whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their Belly*, Phil. 3. 18, 19. They contradict the whole Goſpel, the end whereof is to make Spiritual and pure in heart; So however eſteemed or uſed in the World, it is no light ſin,

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Revellings and ſuch like (as are exceſſive Eatings) *ſhut out of the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 21.

What preſent good doth it bring in lieu of ſo great a loſs? Much is fancied from Dainties and Variety; but they that abound after this manner, are in great Mens Houſes, and few in compariſon to the reſt of Mankind. If one is reſolved not to be betrayed into exceſs, he ſits uneaſie amidſt Temptations; but if he gives way to it, then the pleaſure is ſoon over, for when the Table is taken away, he is in as bad a condition as before ſitting down. Both uneaſie; then he was troubled with the pains of hunger, now of fulneſs, which is rather worſe, for the Meat being in the Belly, all the delight is gone and vaniſhed, but he feels the clog and preſſure thereof. *Yet his Meat in his Bowels is turned, it is the gall of aſpes within him*, Job. 20. 14. There ſucceed irkſome lazineſs, crude eructations, which ſufficiently allay for the ſweet whilſt in the Mouth; when they become empty again, they are tormented with hunger and impatiency. They are always troubled with the deſire of the ſame things, and when obtained, the pleaſure ſoon paſſes away; yea, the deſire is craving when the Belly is full, and the Appetite remains when is no power to ſatisfie. Take Gluttony at beſt Advantage with the greateſt proviſions in the very time of Health and Enjoyment, theſe and ſuch like circumſtances ſower and embitter its chiefeſt delight. But there follows afar of another train of evils, as the loſs of appetite by little and little, and ſeveral ſorts of Diſeaſes creep on. The firm and regular conſtitution of Body is inſenſibly broken by intemperance; *Let their Table become a ſnare before them, and that which ſhould have been for their welfare, let it become a trap*, Pſal. 69. 22. And if that doth let down more haſtily into the Pit, the poor Soul would be ſadly abaſhed if it be demanded; How cameſt thou hither ſo ſoon, not having run out half thy days? Nothing of delight ſurvives from paſt delicacies, even when he is ſeeking more; much leſs in time of ſickneſs he hath this way contracted. He muſt with anguiſh recollect that his former exceſs ſhould prevent the time of Old Age; he muſt think with fear, when he groans under pain, and droops under weakneſs of body, if he knows not how ſoon he ſhall drop into that place where he is *who fared ſumptuouſly every day*. What will it then avail to remember that in his life time he had his good things, when he is there Tormented? They are called good things according

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to the Eſteem and Opinion of the World. And *indeed if* moderately uſed, they are good to the body, but cannot make the whole Man Happy; who doth waſh his ſteps with butter and the Rock pours him out Rivers of Oyl, who doth eat and drink well every day, even he is not throughly ſatisfied, for the Soul doth hunger and thirſt after ſomewhat more.

Some do not conceive greater ſatisfaction in the World then to be at a good Feaſt, and of this they have an opportunity ſome times, but let the Queſtion be put to them as ſoon as over. Your bodies are ſtuffed with good cheer, but are not your minds empty? Did you not imagine it would give you greater contentment, then really it did? If you ſhould every day eat of ſuch abundance, you would by degrees not eſteem of it. Will it effectually cure Sorrow of Mind? Do not preſently conclude others more happy then your ſelves, only becauſe they can eat and drink of more choice things; Your wholeſome food is as pleaſant to you as all rarities to them. In truth neither are made happy only by what you feed on, for that belongs to thoſe Cattle who are feeding all day long; but Mans deſire herein being ſo ſoon ſatisfied, ſeems to ſhew he was deſigned for a more noble Happineſs, then the ſmall and perishing pleaſures of Meat and Drink amount unto. But ſtill the Carnal Perſon fancies there is ſomewhat more; let him find it: What way can any one be more convinced then by experience? Conſult with himſelf, thoſe who know nothing better may have great eſteem for the reliſh of pleaſant things. Yet what is more outward, ſlight, and tranſient then Taſte? They muſt be miſerable indeed who can attain no greater Happineſs. Who have the greateſt admiration hereof are commonly unexperienced through want; and then they really make themſelves miſerable by impatient greedy wiſhes after that, which if they had, would not make them happy. This very thing renders the common ſtate of people more uneaſie and afflicting, then otherwiſe it would be; for albeit they have good and wholeſome food to ſatisfie Nature, and to Miniſter unto ſober delight; nevertheleſs they are diſcontented becauſe they have not thoſe Dainties and Variety the rich have, and this takes off from their own enjoyments. A common miſtake runs throughout all things of the World, of fancying more good in them then really they have; At firſt glance beholding others Table richly ſpread, we call them happy who ſit daily thereat; but when we come to be throughly acquainted, the

felicity

felicity appears to be vain ſhew, exiſting more in imagination then in them who are really partakers thereof. This would be more evident if the great Men did make a true acknowledgement, but they to heighten their own eſteem in ſight of others, by cunning ſilence and falſe inſinuations will make pretences of happineſs, which they cannot find. They would have all people be perſwaded of their own fortunate condition, yet they do not boaſt ſo much of the pleaſure which reſults from their daily choice food, partly becauſe themſelves would be found liars herein, and alſo there is a ſhame conſequent to Gormandizing.

In a neighbour ſin, Men will glory in their ſhame; it is reported there are ſome grown to that Monſtrous height of Impiety, that Men with Men working that which is unſeemly, yet will declare their ſin like *Sodom*, brag thereof amongſt their confidents which one cannot conceive without horrour and indignation. As for leſſer acts of lewdneſs, they have worſe then a Whores forhead; for they are ſo far from being aſhamed, that they will tell it out of their own accord. *Were they aſhamed when they had committed Abomination? Nay, they were not at all aſhamed, neither could they bluſh, Jer.* 6.15 This is the higheſt degree of ſin, which it muſt be a long time before any can arrive at; and even they had a foregoing modeſty which they broke through and overcame; but the general courſe of tranſgreſſion is, that thoſe ſins which may be hidden, whereof none knoweth but a Mans own ſelf, are not made the ſubject of Oſtentation or Apology; for there is no need of hiding that ſhame which is not viſible. And therefore becauſe Gluttony may be practiſed ſecretly it is not juſtified openly; nor hath it owners and advocates: This doth ſomewhat manifeſt that every ſin is attended with ſhame, and alſo there is the witneſſing of our Spirit that the *Judgment of God is due againſt them which commit ſuch things.* Thoſe which may be hid, none (except the Monſters aforementioned in humane ſhape) will ſpeak out to vindicate them; but what are open and themſelves are conſcious of, there they ſeek for Excuſes and Mitigations, or to ſhelter themſelves under the Multitude and Faſhion; However, the inward diſgrace doth ſomewhat afflict which is another thing that embitters the ſin of greedineſs, and is the rich Mans portion.

Be not amongſt Wine Bibbers, amongſt riotous eaters of Fleſh, for the Drunkard and Glutton ſhall come to Poverty, Prov. 23. 20, 21. He goes further then his condition will conveniently bear, ſo be-com-

coming ſubject to want and contempt. To prevent this he is forced to ſhift and uſe indirect means; having no regard to Honeſty or Truth, he tryes any way to get what may gratifie an inordinate Belly, which again devours it as faſt; the pleaſure vaniſhes in the Throat and the Meat is caſt out into the draught. This alone cannot make ſufficient compenſation for weatineſs of body and contrivance of mind, which way to remedy a loſs or forecaſt more gain; and when obtained to conſume it all preſently in a good Dinner or two, this muſt be imprudence: To ſee no fruit or increaſe of his labour, to lay up nothing for Children, and there are other like miſchiefs which more then weigh down all that ſmall and ſeeming good of exceſſive eating: Such kind of conſiderations prevail with the greater part of Mankind to abſtain from it. They generally go over to the other extream, for they rather defraud themſelves to ſcrape and hoard up. It is ſtrange that a reaſonable creature ſhould not hit upon the right mean between both, but from one evil runs to another; *He might eat and drink, and make his Soul enjoy good in his Labour*, Eccleſ. 2. 24. But becauſe that doth not give full ſatisfaction, which was deſigned only to refreſh, therefore he falſly ſeeks for it in another ſin of covetouſneſs. Even thoſe people who are but little governed by Reaſon, leſs by Faith, but principally led by ſence and example, yet have a low eſteem of that good which ariſes from immoderate eating.

It makes dull and heavy, it cauſeth a groſs underſtanding and weary mind, and takes away Mirth. Nature rejoyces when it is relieved, not when oppreſſed; God hath given great variety of his good Creatures for our benefit and comfort, *Gen.* 1. 29. *Gen* 9. 3, 4. 1 *Tim.* 4. 4, 5. And hath ſhewed an excellent way of enjoying them in his Word, *Ye ſhall eat in plenty and be ſatisfied* (not clogged) *and praiſe the Name of the Lord your God*, Joel 2. 26. Bleſſed be his Divine goodneſs, we have more precious promiſes under the Goſpel; but however are ſo to receive the things pertaining to life, that we may more cheerfully perform this duty. But if the heart is overcharged with good Victuals, then it cannot be lifted up in thanksgiving; This would be a ſinful and horrible abuſe, though too common amongſt the Worſhippers of God; who on their Solemn Feaſt-Dayes in memory of our Redemption accompliſhed by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, inſtead of an offering of Praiſe to a Spiritual and Holy Being, as if they

were to Sacrifice to Men of like inclinations with themſelves, do then load themſelves with good cheer. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoyce and be glad in it*, Pſal. 118. 24. But ſome are ſo preſſed with fulneſs that they cannot; and if they are forced to raiſe that with the help of ſtrong drink, this is not Spiritual Joy but Sinful Mirth. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh People and unwiſe*, By keeping the Feaſt with the leaven of Sin and Wickedneſs? Is that your tribute and return of praiſe, to provoke him yet more? Is that a ſeaſonable time of *Rioting and Drunkenneſs*, when you ſhould *put on the Lord Jeſus, and make no proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof*, Rom. 13, 13. 14.

When one is puffed up with Senſuality, he is apt to diſregard the things of God, and they have not a due impreſſion on him; which ſeems to be the reaſon of ſuch ſtrict precepts againſt it, for that is the evil of ſin, to *turn away the heart*, or to ſtifle that aw and ſence of God we ſhould always have upon our minds; and we are to prevent all degrees tending towards it, ſo the ſingle acts of intemperance are to be carefully avoided. It is neceſſary to repeat again our Lords Command, the words of expreſſing it are obſervable; *Take heed to your ſelves leaſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfetting*, Luke 21. 34. At every Meal uſe the utmoſt caution, for you can quickly run over to exceſs. It was noted of the Wicked *Gnoſticks* of *feeding themſelves without fear*, Jude 12. They had no regard to the ſin and danger, which doth eaſily beſet our Feaſts. There are alſo corrupt cravings within which would betray into it: if reſiſted they will at length loſe their force and importunity, but if yielded unto, they will be more urgent. If this ſin deprives of a Kingdom, and hinders from preſent Happineſs, may it not rightly be named a deceiver? Which ſupplants a Man twice, bereaves of good here and hereafter. And who will continue herein is *a prophane Perſon, as* Eſau *who for one morſel of Meat ſold his Birth-right*, Heb. 12. 16. All the dainties of the whole life long are not ſo much to Heaven, as that ſingle meſs of Pottage to a temporal inheritance; May he not be ſtiled prophane in that he defiled the Temple of God, by making uſe of his body only to receive ſuperfluities in, to fill and empty it again? Let him not deceive himſelf, if he ſeemeth to be wiſe in his own conceit, becauſe he hath ſomething in hand by eating to the utmoſt and of the beſt; he doth ſee others abſtemious neglecting the body, not valuing his Luxury, but he doth

not

not perceive they get any thing by so doing. As for his part he is for satisfying the flesh to the very full, for he is sure of what he puts into his Mouth: But this Wisdom of the Glutton is foolishness, and so will appear in the end. When he shall come to be rejected of God for his past delicacies, how fain would he enter into those good things prepared for such, who through grace qualifie themselves here? but who neglected that for inordinate trifles which then utterly disappear, he will have sufficient reason to take up an exceeding bitter cry, when the Lord will not pronounce on him the eternal Blessing.

If there is so little good to be had by this, Will another kind of excess afford more? *Come and see.* By Drunkenness is understood-ness. when one drinketh so much as to lose the free use and exercise of his reason. God hath made Man for himself, endued his mind with faculties and expects to be glorified by them; now when these are rendred unable for that, he is dishonoured, his will is contradicted, which is a provocation of his most excellent Majesty. Herein is some of the evil, and the sin is in being contrary to his revealed Word and Command. *Wo unto them that rise up early in the Morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue till night till Wine inflame them. Wo unto them that are mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength to mingle strong drink*, Isa. 5. 11, 22. Whom God Curses, Man Blesses; for who is esteemed a more worthy and honest Person, then he that will not baulk his Liquor? Surely those were strange times much differing from ours, when *Paul* wrote, *Not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Drunkard, with such an one, no not to eat*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. But now if a Man is not a Drunkard, he is not thought fit to keep Company. He is a dull Fool, and who will come near him? So much we (who call our selves *Christians*, and in things which do not relate to Lust are admirers of Antiquity) have varied from the primitive Fashion. Then *they that were Drunken, were Drunken in the night*, 1 Thes. 5. 7. but in this Age at Noon-day they will Reel and Stagger in the Streets: Frequency takes of Admiration, and they shall not be esteemed the worse for it: Whilst the Liquor is working within them, they *Foam out their own Shame* When the time of Brutishness is over, and their *reason returns*, Dan. 4. 36. they will boast thereof, and for Confirmation will own it with an Oath to put the Matter out of question. These kinds of

Of Drunkenness.

exploit afford much Merry and jocular Diſcourſe. 'Tis become faſhionable, both talked of and practiſed by the *Gentiles* of our time. *Wherein they think it ſtrange* if others of alike Birth and Education *Do not run to the ſame Exceſs of Riot, ſpeaking Evil of them*, or fancying them odd and different ſort of People. But doth not this imputation fall back upon themſelves? For what are they when the diſtinguiſhing Faculty is loſt? Is that becoming the neatneſs of a Well-bred Man to be ſitting *at Tables full of Vomit and Filthineſs, ſo that there is no place clean*? Iſa. 28. 8. To be encompaſſed with a Cloud of Smoke, and the Defilements of Drink and Spitting. A goodly Argument of true worth to have nothing *but ſhameful Spuing for their Glory*, Hab 2. 16. They have the greater number on their ſide. If only ſome few Perſons, they would be as Monſters; but becauſe many are ſo, therefore they would have it praiſe worthy, and of good Report. A ſtrange way of Reaſoning! for at this rate the more univerſal an Evil is, it would loſe its Nature, and become a greater Good.

1 Pet. 4. 3, 4.

It hath been the ſubtlety of Satan, who ſetteth up his Kingdom againſt that of Chriſt, to get the multitude over to his ſide, and to make an outward appearance of Happineſs. Thus he perſwades Men to that which is neither right nor good: In the great Temptation to Drunkenneſs, he is not wanting to ſuggeſt all the Conveniencies thereof, but the Evils are cunningly concealed. As it frees from Care and Sorrow, removes heavineſs from the Heart, making that light and cheerful. It takes away Fear and every thing that vexes: Eſpecially it doth pacifie thoſe grumblings of Conſcience, which is imagined a mighty Priviledge; for as thoſe are irkſome and grievous, ſo it can be no ſmall Comfort to be freed from them. And then it exceeds all other Pleaſures, becauſe of longer continuance. Other ſinful Delights are quickly vaniſhed, but Drunkenneſs doth endure for a conſiderable time, all is Mirth and Jollity. What Delight can be compared to this, which may be had every day, and takes up the greater part thereof? Who but a moroſe ill natured Fellow would not oblige Company upon ſuch pleaſant and eaſie Terms? Doth he not deſerve to be thruſt from the Fellowſhip of mankind, who will not comply with them in a thing ſo much for their Happineſs? Away with Serioufneſs and Morality, which makes dull and miſerable. Do not reproach us with breaking the Law, for God *giveth Wine that maketh glad the Heart of Man*, and the Lord Chriſt

Chriſt was preſent at the Marriage Feaſt, where 'tis ſuppoſed *they had well Drunk*. He hath given great Liberty, and if we do tranſgreſs that, he is merciful to forgive, and we hope he will. God would have mankind be Happy, and we do only endeavour to be ſo.

This laſt is true, but then they ſhould go in the way he chuſes, and not deſpiſe his Wiſdom, or diſtruſt his Faithfulneſs, as if he did not know how to bring them to Happineſs, or would deceive therein. If they will follow after thoſe means themſelves have choſen, they will be certainly deceived. Sin hath this advantage that it looſes nothing for want of ſetting of; if outward ſhew and noiſe (as this is the Rule whereby the World judge) will recommend a thing, there is ſufficient. *Look not upon the VVine when it is Red, when it giveth his Colour in the Cup, when it moveth it ſelf aright, at laſt it biteth like a Serpent, and ſtingeth like an Adder*, Prov. 23. 31, 32. *VVine is a Mocker, ſtrong drink is raging, and whoſoever is deceived thereby is not VViſe*, Prov. 20. 1. It Promiſes much Pleaſure, and yields little, but hath more Pain and Torment, both at preſent and hereafter: This is the Deceit, Men only look upon the ſeeming good it brings, not putting the Evil in Ballance therewith.

Conceive it altogether in the Beginning, Middle, End, with its further conſequents. In the firſt is ſomewhat of Delight, yet the Pleaſure of drink Perishes in the Draught, and who would value ſuch a ſudden Enjoyment? As long as they continue within the bounds of Moderation, it is none of the Pleaſures of ſin; but to go over there is difficulty. When one hath drunk ſufficient for Thirſt and honeſt Refreſhment, to drink yet more is Torment and Violence: The other Glaſs is taken off with as much unwillingneſs as a phyſical Potion: What Artifices are uſed to ſhift a turn or two? Several Circumſtances do manifeſt that it is painful and irkſome to drink to Exceſs.

'Tis only ſo to puny Drunkards, who are weak-headed, and do not Practiſe it, but not to thoſe who are ſtrong and conſtant. But was it not after this manner even to them, when they firſt began this Trade? To uſe their own Phraſe, Was it not ſome time before they could be throughly brought over to take off their Liquor kindly? The Stomach doth not preſently admit of Exceſs, and there muſt be many ſucceſſive Acts to produce the habit of Sottiſhneſs, which were hard and unpleaſant. Thoſe cannot

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brag they have ſerved the Devil with that which coſt them nothing. If ſuch be the Wages of iniquity at preſent, where he promiſed all Delight and Smoothneſs, they might ſuſpect further on, where he hath nothing to ſay. By degrees, that reluctancy and Aukwardneſs goes of, the Body becomes diſpoſed to receive ſuch a quantity without foregoing qualm or diſturbance: And then is Pleaſure in the beginning of the Sin: Yet that paſt trouble is to be put in the Scale over againſt it. Now it is habitual and eaſie. Here again conſtancy takes off the Delight, for if one daily partakes of choice things, he loſes the Savour of them. It is granted, that the Pleaſantneſs doth not conſiſt in the drink, but that is in the Effects thereof. By giving a preſent Freedom from Evils and Enjoyment of Mirth, unleſs the Man is dead Drunk, the fancied Happineſs of whom is the ſame with that of a dead Palſie, which is not ſenſible of Pain. But in the leſſer Act thereof is diſcovery of Shame, Folly, and Madneſs. It is deſcribed, *Prov.* 23. 33, 34, 35. It ends in Sleep, out of which he awakes in Sickneſs and Regret. Trouble and heavineſs poſſeſs again their ancient Room, and are the worſe for that little time they were driven out. Nothing remains of Yeſterdays Delight, which ſeems as if it had never been, but the Bitterneſs and Guilt ſurvive. The firſt may be cured by one days Abſtinence, the other is not ſo eaſily ſhaken off.

That Self Condemnation for what is paſt, and the fearful Expectation of what is to come are not a little afflicting; but the Senſe of this weares away by Cuſtom, and there is no ſuch Remedy to take it off ſooner then this Sin. The Suggeſtions of Conſcience at length are effectually ſtifled by continual drinking, which doth harden againſt Conviction, and transform the Soul into Stupidity; this is eſteemed a wiſe and cunning device: Which yet doth not take away, but only keeps the Danger unknown, till it is fallen into What advantage is it to go more quietly and undiſturbedly to Hell? Thoſe who would have it ſo now, when they come there, the ſame will be their Torment. They are vexed now, if any would interrupt their Courſe; then they will be plagued, that they did not hearken to thoſe who would have done this beſt Act of kindneſs. *Yea they made their Hearts as an Adamant ſtone, leaſt they ſhould hear the Law and the Prophets, which the Lord of Hoſts hath ſent in his Spirit by the former Prophets: Therefore came a great Wrath from the Lord of Hoſts. Therefore it came to paſs that*

as he cried and they would not hear, ſo they cried and I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, Zech. 7. 12, 13. In the days of their Fleſh, they will not hear Gods Word, his Miniſters, and his Spirit within; but when the day of Judgment is come, *they ſhall call upon him, and he will not Anſwer*, Prov. 1. 28. As for thoſe Cups they are now ſo forward to drink, to put all Senſe of this out of their Minds, for all their Policy, one will be even with them; *For in the hand of the Lord there is a Cup, and the Wine is Red: It is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the ſame: But the dregs thereof all the wicked of the Earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them*, Pſal. 75. 8. Nothwithſtanding all the Wiſdom and Conſultations to be had amongſt jovial Acquaintance, you had better now foreſee the Evil, make haſte and eſcape from it; then continue unmindful till it ſhall overtake you, for then you will neither be able to avoid, or put away the Senſe thereof.

Perhaps you will ſet at naught this Counſel, and call to thy Companions, *Come ye and I will fetch Wine, and we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drink, and to morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant*, Iſa. 56. 12. I have hitherto been Drunk ſometimes, but now I will more often: Let not the Sun go over our head, but ſee ſome Tokens of our Joyfulneſs. We are young and have much time before us, let us make uſe of it.

Do not reckon too faſt, for unto whom was it ſaid, but him that counted upon many years. *Thou Fool this night thy Soul ſhall be required of thee*, Luke 12. 19, 20. Whatever your Age is, if you go on after this manner, you know not how ſoon you may be cut off: Some will reply they do not Care, a ſhort Life and a merry one, as long as they live they will be joyful. This is not in their Power: For all high Pretences and Talk, you have many ſad damps amidſt all your days and nights of Pleaſure. They cannot ſpend all their time in Drunkenneſs and Sleep. And the ſpaces of time between, they muſt fill up with buſineſs or Recreation, otherwiſe they would be inconſiſtent and tormented; for if not hardened with the deceitfulneſs of Sin, they are ever and anon troubled with the pricking thereof. They may juſt keep the evil Spirit quiet by continual Action or Company, but no rejoycing is to be had unleſs by the help of ſtrong drink. And therefore are wiſhing for it, but if daily followed, it would be no delightful Remedy: And alſo they would ſooner fall into Sickneſs and Death, which however they ſeem to make light of, they exceedingly fear.

Some

Some have arrived to that degree of intemperance, that they are ſick and diſordered without giving way to it; ſuch cannot abſtain, though they ſhall haſten Death upon themſelves, for they are in continual pain by drought and craving, They know not but Death may conſign over to a greater evil, yet labouring under a real and preſent miſery, they dare venture upon an imaginary and future Torment. They fancy Death may be as a ſleep, and then it is rather to be choſen; or if an inlet to a future ſtate, God may be more merciful then one is aware of, and there is ſome hopes of that, and therefore may run the hazzard; for they are miſerable in this life, that ended they may ceaſe to be in their own imagination; however, let the worſt happen, they can be but miſerable in that which is to come. Upon ſuch like thoughts (unleſs they are become altogether inconſiderate and do not look before them) they reſolve to go on in their courſe if they die ſooner or late. This the world calls bravery; Why then is it not ſo in him lying under a ſcorching Feaver or Dropſie, who will drink as often as he can come at it, though he knows it will be deadly unto him? What Gallantry is to do that, which he is forced unto by the Tyranny of a baſe Appetite? They had rather expoſe themſelves to the haſtineſs and uncertainty of a diſſolution, then live long in a continued courſe of dullneſs and vexation. They make light of Death becauſe they know not how to live, nor what it is to die; if theſe are ſigns of true courage, none are more couragious then the Sons of affliction, ſuch as are diſcontented, in diſtreſs, or deep poverty, or the horſe who knows not his end, and therefore *ruſheth into the Battel.*

Go to, thou that reſolveſt to take the full ſwinge of Drunkenneſs, Thou art but fleſh; it is ſaid, good liquor will make that thrive the better. The countenance indeed may be blubbed, and the body ſtretched forth to ſome bulk, in which ſome pride themſelves, not knowing that it is like a Swine fatted with whay. A ſad manner of thriving to grow worſe; to encreaſe in Bigneſs, and loſe in ſtrength; to be more full *of greaſe and*
Judg. 3.22 *water*, and to be miniſhed from the true ſubſtance of fleſh and blood. Inſtead of ſupplying the body with due moiſture, to make it a meer puddle, as if the way for a bed of herbs to grow better, was not to water, but quite drown it. An odd manner of taking care for the fleſh, to ſet the jarring humours more at variance; An unkind proviſion, to throw in what may ſooner deſtroy

ſtroy it. When it is corruptible of it Self, to make it more ſubject to corruption; and as if there were not ſufficient already, to lay in a further ſtock of pains and diſeaſes; By intemperance ſomewhat of health and ſtrength is daily loſt: Not to mention Feavers, Surſet, and other violent diſtempers occaſioned ſuddenly by one ſingle act whereby many go down quick into the Pit, in the prime of Youth, when a little before they were luſty and ſtrong; but there are other ſorts which creep on by degrees, ſending notice before by a little pain or illneſs that there is a greater approaching. The firſt make the noiſe of mirth to ceaſe, but when ſickneſs comes with full power, then all paſt joviality and delight will not yield a minutes refreſhment; it may be whiſpered by companions in iniquity to take off the blame from themſelves that this might have been if he were temperate, yet the judgment of Phyſitians and daily experience of the World ſufficiently manifeſt, that by Drunkenneſs Men bring Sickneſs upon themſelves, and do not live out half their dayes. He found himſelf ſick and ill at ſeveral times, he drank exceſſively, which (like skirmiſhes before a battel) did proceed from the ſame Enemy, that now with united force Aſſaults him. Before it lay quiet within his Territories, but he hath ſtirred and furniſhed it with ſtrength for the War. Men are apt to think it hard, that they ſhould be ſick when others of the ſame Age and Conſtitution are well. Indeed Acts of Providence in this kind are not ſo eaſily known, but here the Man himſelf hath been the cauſe thereof. Sickneſs is the natural effect of habitual Drunkenneſs: And it cannot be expected that the God of Nature, who Acts according to Nature, ſhould alter his doings, and work a Miracle to preſerve thoſe who are ungrateful and diſobedient, as Drunkards are. Will they ſin againſt his moſt righteous Laws, and yet be angry becauſe he doth not hinder that miſchief which falls upon them by ſo doing? Would they have their Bodies be as Braſs or Iron to receive no hurt, however the Maker of them is provoked by being Inſtruments of iniquity? They might with as much Reaſon have him to be no God, as to take away his Power of revenging all manner of diſobedience: But theſe are only fooliſh Imaginations. *He that ſitteth in the Heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in Deriſion*, Pſal. 2. 4. *I will puniſh the World for their Evil, and the wicked for their iniquity*, Iſa. 13. 11. Let them ſay, or think whatever comes in their mind.

And if they be bound in Fetters, and be holden in Cords of Affliction. Then he sheweth them their Work, and their Transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to Discipline, and Commandeth that they return from iniquity, Job 36. 8, 9, 10. Thou who hast Sinned, resolve sincerely to do so no more. Throw thy self wholly into his gracious Arms. Commit thy whole Body and Soul intirely into his disposal. And then if thou diest, it will never be worse for thee in so doing. Who knoweth but he may raise thee up, and say to the Ax that is now laid to the Root of the Tree? *Let him alone one year longer, and if he bear Fruit well; but if not, then cut him down.* He may grant recovery to see, if thou wilt obey and please him by Godliness and Sobriety of living henceforward, and when the forbearance and Long-suffering of God doth not lead to Repentance; at length the final and irreversible voice will go out, *Cut it down, Why cumbreth it the Ground?*

Too many have not taken warning, but died in their Sins. In what a fearful Condition were they during the last Sickness? When they made Shipwrack of their Body and Soul, and are just dropping into the Bottomless Pit. Their doom is written, 1 *Cor.*6.10. *Gal.* 5. 21. *Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, and then they must go into another place, *Whatsoever was not written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire*, Rev. 20. 5. *Those that do iniquity shall be cast into a Furnace of Fire*, Mat. 13 42. Now Drunkenness is such, being a Transgression of the Law in the Old and New Testament. *Deut.* 29. 19. *Isa.* 24. 9. *and* 28. 1, 3, 7. *Hab.* 2. 15. *Joel* 1. 5. *Luke* 21. 34. *Eph.* 5. 18. It is not a thing of naught if taken abstractedly, but this Sin seldom goes single. Like the unclean Spirit, it taketh to him seven other Spirits more wicked then himself, it hath worse Sins and Abominations going along therewith. As hardening ones self against God, prophane and idle Talk, vain Swearing, Lust, Lying, readiness to any mischief. What evil hath not the Drunkard done? Even righteous *Lot* was betrayed to commit Incest with his own Daughter. When a Man is in this Condition, he hath no fear of God before his Eyes. He is not himself, but inclined to all manner of Sin, which he will commit according as he hath opportunity and invitation. Let not the World say it is a small Sin, for it is great in the consequent Evils, and the wrath of God is plainly revealed against it.

There

There is no Reaſon why Men ſhould follow it with ſuch Greedineſs: know ye what ye do, *To bring on your ſelves ſwift Deſtruction*? to plunge your ſelves yet ſooner into it? You are ſenſible of the evil and inconveniency of this preſent Life occaſioned by your Sin, and will you to be rid of that thruſt your ſelves into greater? This would be as ridiculous madneſs, as to divert the Pain of a cut Finger, to pour ſcalding Oyl upon the whole Body: There is a better way ſhewed by taking away the cauſe of the Grief, which you are exhorted unto, and to prevent all the Miſery. You cannot endure Thirſt, how then would you like to be in that place where he is, *Who wants a drop of water to cool his Tongue?* Luke 16.24. If you could have a ſhort and merry Life, that would no more make amends for a ſad Eternity then a ſingle pleaſant dream, now doth for an hundred years Miſery.

There is a Drunkard who thinks he ſhall eſcape; becauſe he is no Murderer, Extortioner, unjuſt Perſon, he pays every one his due, and is no Mans Enemy but his own, he is of the good natured ſort, for he cannot endure quarrelling, but prevents it in the beginning, and is a Peace-maker. He abhors Malice, Envying, Striſe, and hath ſeveral good Qualities. Perhaps he is ungodly or a Swearer, but if not: In Truth ſo far thou doſt well, thou comeſt near being qualified to be one of the Saints in light; *Yet lackeſt thou one thing*, Go and put away thy Drunkenneſs, forſake all thy Companions in evil, come and follow Chriſt, and thou ſhalt have better Fellowſhip in Heaven. Many will go away ſorrowful at this Saying, for they think the other ſufficient, and this the only Delight they have, which they care not to part with; then they have no Lot or Portion in the Kingdom of God. Neither let them think they may retain it throughout their Life, and leave it off in Old Age, when they cannot Taſte what they drink; or in Sickneſs when their Stomach will not bear it, then they will repent of their former Exceſs. Thank you for nothing, you will Sin as long as you can, and when not able any longer you will leave off *Is it good that God ſhould ſearch you out? Or as one Man mocketh another, do ye ſo mock him?* Job 13. 9. He will certainly do it Neither will he be impoſed upon by the fooliſh Craft, you think to uſe. *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all Men, teaching us that denying ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly in this preſent World*, Tit. 2. 11, 12. It is no denial of a thing, when one cannot make uſe of it; neither

ther is it living ſoberly in this preſent World, when he is going out of it. Such Temperance as God is well-pleaſed with, and will Reward, muſt be exerciſed in time of full Health and Vigour; when the Man might run to the ſame Exceſs of Riot with others, but obedience only ſhall reſtrain him, not Bodily infirmities or other worldly Reaſon.

Zech. 7.6.

See Ante, p. 284, 285.

From what hath been already noted it appears, that there doth not ariſe ſuch a mighty Gratification from this Sin: The Delight is not till, as commonly ſaid, the Senſes are loſt; ſo when the Man can leaſt diſcern between Good and Evil, he moſt admires it. They are worſe natured, who require ſuch hard and unpleaſant things of their Companions, who preſs that upon them which is received with Abhorrency as Sink-water; but no fault is in them, who refuſe to comply with a baſe Humour. Such would account themſelves good and kind Souls, the Promoters of Happineſs, who are the only Authors of uneaſineſs and Vexation: A monſtrous abſurdity and reverſal of the Nature of things. When the drinking is contrary to all Law, thoſe are reputed the principal Engines of Mirth who do compel; but who ſuffers it, is made the Object of Reproach and Laughter. It is ſo among hot-headed Youths, and the Beaſts of the People. Others do uſe the method of fair intreaty, and exaſperating Expreſſions to entice unto ſinful Compliance. And if after all the Man will not yield, an ill Character is faſtened on him. When he is ſollicited, it comes into his mind. *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin again God?* Here he is put to his Choice, Whether he will pleaſe vain and ſinful Men, or the Great and Holy Lord Governour of the World, who would have his Laws obſerved, they would have them broken. *If he is out of their ſight, yet he both ſees and knows what they do. And he would be alſo in their knowledge, if they did not uſe ſuch abominable means to ſtifle and deface it.* But if they can apprehend any thing of his infinite Perfection, Whether it be right to obey his Good-will, rather then comply with their wicked Humour, *Judge ye.* They muſt acknowledge him their Superiour, and they could not take it well if any thing beneath themſelves ſhould be preferred before them. It is no Moroſeneſs of Temper to refuſe obliging, *a Man that ſhall die, and the Son of Man that ſhall be as Graſs,* If by ſo doing he muſt diſpleaſe God his Saviour, *Who ſtretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain.*

Gen. 39.9.

To

To incur his diſpleaſure any way muſt be upon dangerous terms, but here they are not ſo acceptable or eaſie: If it be ſuch a pleaſure to drink, Why are you angry it ſhould be ſifted out and examined? If deſtruction and miſery are in their ways, why are Men enraged it ſhould be found out and diſcovered? Would they rather fall into it, then be told off their danger? They cannot endure to be perſwaded of from their deceitful Vanities; Away with this turbulent Fellow, *it is not fit he ſhould live.* There is but little good to be had in this World, and he would bereave us even of that. It doth provoke and ſet the World in a rage to ſtrike immediately upon their luſts. *When the two prophets ſhall have finiſhed their Teſtimony, and ſhall be killed, then they that dwell on the Earth ſhall rejoyce over them, and make merry, and ſhall ſend gifts one to another, becauſe theſe prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth*, Rev. 11. 10. *Eliſha* was accounted one that *troubled* Iſrael, 1 *Kings* 18. 17. The Hiſtory of the Prophets, Chriſt and Apoſtles ſhew what an eſteem the World had of them, and how exaſperated upon the account of their faithful dealing; who did beſt deſerve of the World, were leaſt accounted of by it. How hath the God of this World blinded the eyes of Men, that they ſhould evil entreat, kill and ſtone the Meſſengers of their Peace and Safety, even *the Servants of the Moſt High God which ſhewed unto them the way of Salvation*, Acts 16. 17. It is no new thing under the Sun to have evil recompenced for good, that thoſe ſhould not be thought fit to live amongſt Mankind, who are moſt inſtrumental to their welfare.

Sirs, ye are deluded with a falſe appearance, and if ye lay hold of that, ye loſe the true happineſs. The preſent deceit is uſed for an eaſe or remedy of the evils of life; but would it not be better to be without ſome of them, and have a more excellent remedy for the reſt? God forbid that any ſhould take away the true delights of the Sons of Men; but they are put in mind to remove thoſe falſe ones which are not of his ordaining, and to place his inſtead thereof, which when themſelves have fully taſted, will affirm to be better. You are not forbid ſtrong drink, nor Wine, but only ſhewed a more excellent way of receiving them; You are required to be Men ſtill, to abide in that honour you are endued with; otherwiſe, you would be like the Beaſts that Periſh. Several are as lovely to behold, and if your underſtanding were ſet aſide, you would become as one of them, which

this

this ſin doth for the time: It is haſtily ſaid, He that drinketh leaſt, drinketh like a Beaſt; to which it may be added by way of return, he who drinketh moſt, drinketh like a Sow which is filthy and abominable of all fore-footed Creatures. Into a low degree, even the worſt of them he is degenerated; for in the greateſt part are to be ſeen ſome foot-ſteps of pure and uncorrupted Nature, they do not eat nor drink further then does them good; and if Man would be well according to his ſenſitive part (which he is not to reſt in, but aſcend higher) *ask now the Beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee*, Job 12. 7. He muſt receive ſuſtenance in the ſame manner as they do; There are ſome would fain have the ſtupidity & inconſideration of a Beaſt, and yet would not be contented with the like Enjoyments. Who would have their reaſon baniſhed, for that is the Serioufneſs and Morality they cannot endure; They know not what conduces to their Perfection and Glory, they are willingly ignorant that this aſſiſted by Grace tends to an Immortal and Happy Being, if they would ſuffer themſelves to be guided by it: Take away Thought and Conſideration, *Man is like a wild Aſſes colt*, which ſports for a while, but afterwards is heavy; ſo he may frollick it a little in his younger days, then become dull, and ſpend the greateſt part of his life void of true cheerfulneſs; and that ended, a worſe thing may befall him.

For *Pſal.* 104. 15. *John* 2. 10. Which are commonly alledged in vindication of this ſin, when it rather argues of more Ingratitude and Diſobedience. Our Gracious God hath given this good creature for neceſſary refreſhment and honeſt cheerfulneſs, ſo there is no waſte or diſturbance to reaſon. But if Men will not be content with this Liberty, and when God hath ordered they ſhall drink no more after theſe ends are anſwered, if they will go further *to add Drunkenneſs to Thirſt*, Deut. 29. 19. To force down more after they *have well drunk already*, and have not the leaſt Appetite, there is the provocation of this ſin. Nothing exaſperates ſo much as abuſed favour, and becauſe God hath been good therefore for Men to be more wicked, this makes ſin to be exceeding ſinful. He is moſt diſpleaſed with thoſe which are committed againſt his loving-kindneſs, and therefore becauſe he hath given great liberty to tranſgreſs that, and to preſume upon his being merciful to forgive, is a perverſe way of reaſoning, and makes the ſin ſeven times greater. To hope that God will forgive

give ſuch Malicious and Preſumptuous Offenders or Deſpiſers is in effect that he will prove a Liar; *But I will puniſh you according to the fruit of your doings, ſaith the Lord*, Jer. 21. 14. Every Mans ſin would be pardoned, if hopes or wiſhes alone would induce the Lord to pardon them; In truth he is what he hath proclaimed himſelf, *The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth* (if ſo, he is to be believed what he ſaith further) *keeping Mercy for thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion and ſin, and that will by no means clear the Guilty*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. His mercy is confirmed more then ten times before this of Judgment comes. Think not this laſt hard, O ye Tranſgreſſors; for whether is meet, you ſhould turn away from your ſins, or God ſhould deveſt himſelf of Juſtice and Truth rather then puniſh you for the ſame? Which can be moſt reaſonably expected, either your ſelves muſt go into Hell, or that the Words he hath ſpoken ſhall come to naught? *God hath ſpoken once, twice have I heard this that power belongeth unto God*, Pſal. 62. 11. *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked ſhall not be unpuniſhed*, Prov. 11. 21. Do not think to trifle with him, for he is a Righteous Judge, and a Father only to thoſe who perform unto him the Obedience of Children. Luke 21. 22. Rom. 3. 5.

As for the other vain Imaginations the Drunkard hath, they are grounded upon unbelief or deſperate folly. He cannot be ſo ſenceleſs to conclude, it ſhall happen to him according to his unbelief, that there is no future State, only becauſe he thinks ſo, or would have it ſo, and thus make void the fixed decrees of Almighty God with his own weak fancy or fruitleſs deſire. If he is unbelieving now, and ſo reſolves to continue, the firſt thing that ſhall convince of the miſtake will be his own woful experience; but when this ſhall teach him, his condition will be without hope or remedy. It would be a more wiſe way to believe and ſo avoid, then to go with an evil heart of unbelief, till death delivers him over, where he ſhall be forced to believe and tremble, and afterwards ſee and ſuffer. But if he hath not quite loſt his Faith, he muſt be convinced of a more fooliſh manner of Acting. He abhors and cannot endure his preſent Life becauſe it is miſerable; there is the ſame Reaſon, he ſhould not thruſt himſelf forward into the other; for if the Puniſhment of Sin is now ſo grievous, that Men would do any thing to be rid of it, what will it be hereafter when God ſhall ſtretch forth his Arm to take full Vengeance on the Antep. 288 Jer. 12. 5.

Workers

Workers of iniquity? These had better take warning; God hath given them a ſpace to repent of their Drunkenneſs. Be ſure to comply with his gracious purpoſe, make their Peace with him, lengthen out their time by all lawful means, to prepare the more for the Bridegroom's coming. But if they will go on in their own former way, they ſhall Taſte and Feel this to be true. *Their Grapes are Grapes of Gall, their Cluſters are bitter. Their wine is the Poiſon of Dragons, and the cruel Venom of Aſps*, Deut. 32. 32, 33.

What hath poſſeſſed the minds of Men to be ſo in love with this Evil? All are not, for *Turks* and *Infidels* are not ſo guilty thereof as the Chriſtian World. A Company of People who profeſs to believe the Scriptures in which are contained ſevere Threatnings againſt this Sin, yet they moſt of all do commit it. The Laws and Preſcriptions of Heathen Deities and falſe Prophets throughout the World are obſerved; but here in Chriſtendom Men do not obey the Commandments of the Lord and his Chriſt. *The words of* Jonadab *the Son of* Rechab, *that he commanded his Sons not to drink Wine, are performed*, Jer. 35. 14. But our bountiful Lord hath permitted the good uſe thereof with this charge, *Be ye not drunk with Wine wherein is exceſs*, Eph. 5. 18. Yet Men have tranſgreſſed his Voice, wherefore the *Rechabites* may be their Judges, and it will be more tolerable in the day of Judgment for *Mahometans* and *Idolaters* then for this ſottiſh Generation. *O fooliſh People, who hath bewitched you that you ſhould not obey the Truth, before whoſe eyes Jeſus Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth crucified among you?* Gal. 3. 1. All of you hear him Preached, and ſome have drunk of the Cup of the Lord; yet you reſort again to the Cup of Devils, by Drinking after ſuch an exceſſive manner, as they of old did in Sacrificing to Evil Spirits, which alſo now chiefly gratifies them who prompt to ſin and diſobedience.

If we did allow for the Temptations of Drink and Company; yet the loſs of Gods Favour, Peace of Mind, and health of Body will not be ſufficiently recompenced with that pretended conveniency. Look not only upon the good colour of the Liquor, nor hearken to the Merriment of Companions when they are at it, but conſider the end: Think upon the whole life and way of thoſe jolly Perſons, and then tell me whether drunkenneſs is not prejudicial to Mans Happineſs? But couldſt thou peep into the Chambers of Death (as that may be done by Faith) and ſee thoſe poor Souls,

Souls who were once Drinking and making Merry on the Earth, the Pit hath ſhut her Mouth upon them, and now they are full of Anguiſh and Indignation for their former Folly; There remains ſtill the like Threatning to the *Drunkards of* England, *the Drunkards of* England *ſhall be troden under Feet*, Iſa. 28. 3. For the Judgment of God is the ſame againſt all Nations, Times and People who commit the ſame offence. Why will they not be perſwaded to come out of ſuch a way? To draw off from ſo great a danger? *When* Iſrael *ſaw the* Egyptians *dead on the Sea-ſhore, the People feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his Servant* Moſes, *Exod.* 14. 30, 31. And have you not known ſome who have been as it were drowned in a Flood of Drink? Who have brought themſelves into the Dropſy and other Diſeaſes, and ſeveral ways have came to an untimely fearful end? And will you not fear the Lord, and believe on the Lord, his Son, and Apoſtles, who make mention of worſe things to come hereafter then what we ſee commonly happen? *How oft is the Candle of the wicked put out? And how oft cometh their deſtruction upon them? God diſtributeth Sorrows in his Anger*, Job 21. 17. How many have we heard to have killed themſelves with Brandy, who have burnt up their own Vital Spirits with the greater heat of Liquors, and by innumerable Accidents have been haſtily cut off, and all occaſioned through Intemperance. *Job* calls it *their Deſtruction*, for themſelves are the Author of it; and is not God diſpleaſed with Mens doings after this manner?

Some may be apt to ſay, this is too home: But it is too true by ſad and daily experience, and fit to be obſerved that all henceforward may take care to themſelves. Examples ſhould be taken Notice of, and *Written for our Admonition upon whom the ends of the World are come*, 1 Cor. 10. 11. In this Generation alſo where Drunkenneſs doth abound, and *the Men are ſetled on their lees*, Zeph. 1. 12. If any hath a real love and compaſſion for Mankind, he is not to be blamed if he doth uſe the moſt plain and obvious expreſſions, to prevent thoſe evils which come upon them by their Sin and Folly. *Any words are more tolerable then to ſuffer the thing it ſelf*; Several will find fault with this way of Writing uſed in this Chapter eſpecially; But they are deſired to conſider likewiſe, how the ſtile of Scripture runs exactly according to thoſe Times when it was firſt Penned, and that is

Pſal. 119. 42. to be the Rule of all after Ages. If others think that here it hath been varied from, when thoſe common ſayings and excuſes were inſerted which are not to be found in the *Word*, yet there it Prov. 26. 5 is ſaid, *Anſwer a fool according to his folly leaſt he be wiſe in his own conceit*. It hath been endeavoured to convince them in their own way of Arguing; for why ſhould Wickedneſs brave it out and paſs uncontradicted? We have aſſurance, that one time (yet to come) *All iniquity ſhall ſtop her Mouth*, Pſal. 107. 42. The means to accompliſh which is to take off that Colour and Varniſh of Reaſon, to diſcover that plauſible ſhew of Wit with which Men countenance their Sin. *For he flattereth himſelf in his own ſight, until his Iniquity ſhall be found to be hateful*, Pſal. 36. 2. Which hath been here ſomewhat manifeſted according to the Ability God hath given.

Let the Mad and Frantick World pauſe for a while; why, you may continue Men ſtill, and yet go in another way: You may ſtill retain the ſame Affections and Deſires, and have them at preſent in a good manner contented; however, you may refrain for a little while from the full Gratification of them. You are now all for good Drink, the preſcribed Meaſure is now much better then exceſs, but for further encouragement Our Lord ſaid juſt before his Paſſion, *I will drink no more of the fruit of the Vine, until that day that I drink it new in the Kingdom of God*, Mark 14. 25. *And in this Mountain ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make unto all People a Feaſt of fat Things, a Feaſt of Wines on the lees, of fat things full of Marrow, of Wines on the lees well refined*, Iſa. 25. 6 Indeed, ſuch groſs and ſenſual Pleaſures are not to be expected in Heaven as reſult from Eating and Drinking; even here it is ſaid *well refined*: But undoubtedly others will be ſubſtituted in the Room, which ſhall more refreſh then theſe do now, according to what another Prophet ſaith, *Their heart ſhall rejoyce as through Wine, their heart ſhall rejoyce in the Lord*, Zech. 10. 7. It ſhall give us alike ſatisfaction as Wine doth now, but as much greater and of longer continuance as the Infinite and everlaſting God in whom all fulneſs dwells, doth exceed that little and empty delight which is now to be had from the Creature. The Spirit of God condeſcends to our Infirmity, and exhorts to his Obedience by promiſing the ſame things

which

which we now eagerly desire after. Who is all for pleasant Drink, hath the very same invitation to follow after the things of his Kingdom. If the Drunkard will leave off his sinful Courses, he shall find more content and less inconveniency; moreover exceeding great and Eternal Happiness hereafter.

Perhaps he will say, he hath been so long used to it that he cannot. Indeed a wicked habit is not quickly or easily shaken off; it crept on by degrees, and will stick close, but there is an absolute necessity. *Except ye repent, ye shall perish*, twice asserted, *Luke* 13. And that is a through change of mind and reformation of Life; If he hath been guilty of Drunkenness, let him ask Pardon for it, and be so no more. Seek for the Grace of God, which is sufficient to subdue the power of this or any Sin. The Man must be sure sincerely to labour together therewith, and endeavour to be freed from Sottishness the same way he got it; let him daily deny himself somewhat and abridge a little of his wonted Measure; by this means he may be at length free from it.

It is commonly pleaded by him, who lies under a custom of sin that he cannot forsake it; So he flatters and beguiles his own Soul, that either God will not require him to do an impossible thing, and therefore he shall be excused; or he is an hard Master to shut a Man out of Heaven and cast him into Hell for a thing he could not help. But O wicked Servant! Wherefore dost thou to keep thine own wickedness accuse God foolishly and falsly? *For he will not lay upon Man more then right, that he should enter into Judgment with God*, Job 34. 23. *Repent, if peradventure the iniquity of thine heart may be forgiven*; Consider seriously, thou alone hast wilfully brought thy self under the Power and Slavery of Sin. By former hardening thy heart, and not hearing Gods Voice, when thou hadst more strength, and sin less; At the first entrance upon the Practice of it thou couldst more easily have not done, then done it; after thou couldst refrain with a small irksomness, till sin at length began to prevail through thine own neglect to resist, and willingness to entertain it. And because it is more difficult to part with, thou concludest impossible; No habit, however long in contracting

is impoſſible to be removed, it may be done though with difficulty. It cannot be done in an Inſtant, but may in Succeſſion of time. There is none ſo far gone in the Diſeaſe of Drunkenneſs or other Sin, but there is hope of Cure; Wherefore thoſe Sinners are required to attend to the exhortation, *Rom.* 13. 11, 12, 13, 14. Take the Bible into their hands and read it, whether they will hear or forbear, it hath been here enforced with Motives out of the ſaid Book; if they neglect, it is at their Peril; they are *Children of Darkneſs*; *But let us, who are of the Day be Sober, putting on the Breaſt-plate of Faith and Love, and for an Helmet the hope of Salvation*, 1 Theſ. 5. 8. And theſe things even now will give us more comfort and Satisfaction, then they can meet with in Stupidity and Drunkenneſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs.

THeſe are ſome of thoſe *Works of the Fleſh*, Gal. 5. 19.21. *Of the which they that do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* But what preſent Good do they bring in recompence of ſo great a Loſs? It is ſurmiſed much, becauſe of the inclination in Mans Nature to theſe Luſts; they do likewiſe beat ſtrongly upon the outward Senſe, and it ſeems hard he ſhould be reſtrained to gratifie them. It is the moſt intenſe Delight Man enjoys, and why ſhould he not find ſome Pleaſure amidſt ſo many Evils and Miſeries of Life? All Fleſh conſorteth according to its kind, and muſt Man who hath the ſame Tendency be hindred from it? Were thoſe Deſires put in only to torment him, in that he muſt not Act accordingly? Doth God, to magnifie his Power and Pleaſure, command him to abſtain from that which by the Law in his Members, he is bound to obey? And then how much Pleaſure and Mirth doth the Diſcourſe thereof afford? More is fancied in the Act and Fruition.

The preſent Deſign requires to ſet forth Sin in its utmoſt advantage, and there may be other Circumſtances conceived, but allowing for all the Delight thereof; yet this is not that *Good thing, which is ſet before the Sons of Men.* Indeed Sin is improved to the utmoſt: Though its Followers with all their Wit and Contrivance cannot find out any new Pleaſures, yet what they have already they manage with ſo much Skill, that they receive as much Delight from them as poſſibly can be had, and yet all comes ſhort of the *True Happineſs.* As for theſe Fleſhly Luſts, the trouble and expectation going before, and thoſe Inconveniencies and Evil afterwards, will more then exceed the ſudden Complacency. The Gall is much more then pure Honey, if any is to be found,

which

which is little, like that *at the end of* Jonathan's *Rod*, 1 Sam. 14. 43.

Many of them which uſed curious Arts, brought the Books together and burnt them before all Men, ſo mightily grew the word of God and prevailed, Acts 19. 19,20. And there is the ſame Reaſon ſtill, that thoſe Printed Songs, Romances, Play-Books, which propagate Sin in the World, and in an implicit manner (under heatheniſh Titles) call to queſtion Gods Juſtice and Truth in giving Laws to mankind, ſhould alſo be burnt, as thoſe are, which contain ſcandalous Reflections upon the King and Goverment: And ſo accordingly they would be thrown into the Flames, if the word of God did now ſo mightily grow and prevail, as it did in thoſe firſt and pureſt times. But ſeeing they are ſtill extant to corrupt the Minds and Manners of People, ſomething is to be ſaid more particularly.

Behold in this thou art not juſt, I will anſwer thee, that God is greater then Man: Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him? For he giveth not Account of any of his Matters, Job 33. 12, 13. He doth more exceed the greateſt Monarch then this vaſt Globe of the World, a ſingle Duſt of the Ballance; and is not bound to give the leaſt Account of whatever he enjoyns us. *Therefore ſhall ye keep my Commandments, and do them, I am the Lord*, Lev. 22. 31. Preſent and cheerful Obedience is to be paid unto him, without perverſe Diſputings of corrupt Minds. *By Faith* Abraham *when he was called to go out into a place which he ſhould after receive for an Inheritance obeyed, and went out not knowing whether he went*, Heb. 11. 8, 9. Who believes in God that formed him, if he would be juſtified with faithful *Abraham*, muſt perform his Commands how contrary ſoever they appear to Fleſh and Blood, if he doth not preſently underſtand, wherefore the Lord ſhould require ſuch things, as he doth commonly make that known afterwards. The Servant is to do, not to examine the Will of his Maſter. But who *who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and Earth?* Yet condeſcends to that (which the proud Men of the World will not) as to permit his Servants to *reaſon of his righteous Acts*, 1 Sam. 12. 7. *and to judge of the equality of his ways*, Ezek. 18. 25. and for thoſe who deſpiſe this manner of Goodneſs, there is ſeverity reſerved in ſtore.

The Case in hand seems opposite to carnal Reason, because Flesh will argue for fleshly Lusts; nevertheless take it not quite away, but only its Prejudice and Corruption; it may put in a lawful Claim without boundless or extravagant Desires, and then Flesh it self may judge how just and reasonable the Laws of God are. Those natural Inclinations are not restrained, but expresly ordered to be complyed withal, *Gen.* 2. 18. *Gen.* 9. 1. 1 *Cor.* 7. 2, 9. This one Expedient vindicates the Justice and Goodness of God from all those Cavils of Men, walking after their own Lusts. But as he is Soveraign Lord to exercise his Kingdom and Dominion over Men, he doth in this as in the other things, allow a lawful Liberty, and is pleased further to try our Obedience.

The Gallants will cry Pish, a Wife is an irksome thing to Men of Fashion. They cannot endure to be confined. The Blood runs warm in their Veins and they are wanton; *When I had fed them to the full, they then committed Adultery, and assembled themselves by Troops in the Harlots Houses: they were as fed Horses in the Morning every one Neighed after his Neighbours Wife*, Jer. 5. 7, 8. If these marry, it is to get Heirs to inherit their Estate, but they will not be deprived of wonted Libertinism. They hunt out after convenient Objects, not valuing whether they break through another Mans inclosure or sport in a Common. Are not these brisk Men more Happy and better esteemed of in the World, then those dull Flegmatick Souls who keep the *Marriage Bed undefiled*? Most certainly such are of the safer side as for the time to come, but for the present who hath the greater share of Happiness? It may be judged of, when the ways of the Lascivious Wanton are somewhat laid open.

The Lord hath been Witness between thee and the Wife of thy Youth, against whom thou hast dealt Treacherously, yet is she thy Companion and Wife of thy Covenant, Mal. 2. 14. When a Man proves unfaithful, his Heart is alienated from her who is the constant Companion of his Bed; for going after Strangers makes affection cease towards his own: Perhaps at first it was not so much unkindness as to gratifie an extravagant Desire; but the Seeds of hatred are sown, which spring up and embitter their other Delights. Who have sufficient of outward Blessings, yet all is spoiled by this one accursed thing. Those mutual Heart-burnings, Discontent, sad Wishes and Imprecations take away the Relish of other Enjoyments. It is very hard on the Womans side, that she must be wretched

wretched for no fault of her own, but meerly the iniquity and baſeneſs of her Husband; who (according to the uſual Methods of injuſtice) commits a double Tranſgreſſion; Firſt, becomes perfidious, and then conceives Hatred, which laſt is thought an excuſe of the Sin, when in Truth it is a worſe Aggravation thereof. If he hath the leaſt Senſe of God above, thoſe ſevere girds and twitches of Conſcience do more then abundantly take off from the Sweetneſs of ſtolen Waters. If he hath any degree of common Nature, he cannot but be moved with his own injury and falſhood towards whom he is bound to give that which is equal, and obſerve the ſolemn Oath and Promiſe between them. Many particulars do ſufficiently ſhew, that he who violates conjugal Chaſtity, procures continued Vexation unto himſelf; and for a few hours running after unlawful Love, he renders the whole Courſe of his Life miſerable: This Truth is ſo diſcernable that more need not to be ſaid thereof. It is not altogether ſo pleaſant for married Men, to follow theſe Luſts of the Fleſh: but the ſingle Perſon who hath none to controul him, who is tyed to none, but at Liberty for all, he finds the pretended good of them.

But it would be better for him if he let them alone, or have the lawful Remedy. No, no, Crys the young Man. Variety is pleaſant, one time for this, then for another wherever Beauty or Change invite him: At firſt, this kind of Life may ſeem delightful, thoſe Preparatives do ſomewhat pleaſe. That o'ſcene and filthy Talk, laſcivious Songs, wanton Dalliances and rude Geſtures (for thus the Devils Souldier is trained up and Diſciplined) are a little diverting, till abundant and repeated uſe doth alſo take that away. If the ſtripling hath not caſt off all regard to God and his Worſhip (as that is ſeldom, for the impreſſions are then more ſtrong and ſenſible, and it may be preſerved by good Education of Parents) then his thoughts will be apt to accuſe him. It is not meet, the ſame Tongue wherewith Prayers and Praiſes are offered up unto the Moſt High God, ſhould be defiled with corrupt Communications, or ſinging forth the Encomium of ſin and iniquity. *Therewith to Bleſs God the Father, and therewith to diſhonour him. Out of the ſame Mouth proceedeth Good and Evil; My Brethren theſe things ought not ſo to be. Doth a Fountain ſend forth at the ſame place ſweet water and bitter?* Jam. 3. 10, 11. Conſcience will make ſuch Reflections, which turn outward Laughter into an inward Sigh. This bitter allay is mingled with the jocular

cular and merry Diſcourſe as it is called. And if he will not think of theſe things, but go on making much noiſe, yet there is a ſad ſting behind; that of the Lord Jeſus ſhall be fulfilled, *I ſay unto you, that every idle word that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account thereof in the Day of Judgment, for by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be Condemned*, Mat. 12 36, 37. Even at preſent a Man diſcovereth himſelf by the Talk of his Mouth; Where proceeds forth Filthineſs and Folly, it is a ſtrong Preſumption that ſuch is he himſelf. A noble Subject to converſe upon, whereof a Man cannot think without abhorrence. A ſign of an exalted and raiſed Spirit, to depreſs the Mind into a Beaſt: Whatever delight ariſes hereby, it is like that of Children or Fools. The great Talkers of this kind, do not pretend to ſuch a mighty degree of Pleaſure from the meer Diſcourſe; that is ſaid to be when Words are reduced into Actions.

Here lies a rub in the young Mans way, and this helps for removal thereof. That ſhame and modeſty of Nature is an hindrance to him from doing thus wickedly. He gives back, and had rather let it alone. And therefore this muſt be laid aſide, (which is not done without time and difficulty) before the expected Satisfaction can be had. The mind is ſpoiled of its moſt lovely Ornament before he comes to the doing of thoſe things in ſecret, whereof it is a ſhame to ſpeak. That Virgin bluſh (then which nothing is more beautiful) muſt be gone. Accordingly the modern way of breeding is to drive that away as ſoon as poſſible. It is more eminent in the Female Sex, and was formerly an excellency, but now eſteemed the effect of Countrey Education, laughed at, and by keeping Company with the Town Ladies, and frequenting the Play-houſe it is at length utterly loſt. In the other it goes away by aſſociating with Laſcivious Perſons, and complying with unſavoury Diſcourſe. Is this to *bring up Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*? Certainly this way doth ſooner lead them to commit all iniquity with Greedineſs, and makes them the *Children of Hell*. Corruption moves quick enough of it ſelf, there is no need of taking away the Clog that he may run more haſtily in the broad way. However it is irkſome to do that, but then he may fall to *committing of Folly*; for ſo the Holy Ghoſt in a peculiar manner calls this Sin. The foregoing diſturbance is removed, there ſucceeds another afterwards.

Thoſe qualms of Conſcience immediately after the Fact, are more bitter then the ſweet of the beloved Sin. They are equal in Degree, but longer in Duration. That Horrour and Diſtraction of mind for what is done, thoſe frightful Suggeſtions of having offended God, the Blackneſs of Guilt which comes forth and ſits heavy upon the Soul, Indignation and Anguiſh, all theſe ſtand in oppoſition to the delight he had. The luſtful Perſon is ſenſible of thus much at firſt, which render the Sin uneaſie and diſquieting. He thinks to follow it no longer: But then the Devil or his Inſtruments wicked Companions, or his own deceitful Heart may dictate, That at firſt he will meet with ſuch kind of Bugbears: The Dog within will at length ceaſe to bite, he may grumble a little, but that is nothing. Go reſolutely on and he will not find ſuch ſevere reſiſtance. His own experience aſſures him every time he Practiſes it, there is leſs Reluctancy. The raw and unexperienced Souldier is frightned at the ſmoke of Guns, his Heart pants at every Puſh or Charge, but the old Marches on undountedly, and is not troubled with Fears. Never be diſcouraged if a thick Cloud ſhould ariſe in thy mind; do not value every *Dart that ſtrikes through the Liver*; do not fear the aſſaults of the armed Man within thee. The Souldier is ſtrengthened with Brandy, and thou mayſt afterwards reſort to good Liquor to drown Melancholy fancies, Be Patient, reſiſt them, and they will by degrees vaniſh. If thy Acquaintance find thee dejected, they will Laugh at thee; do as they have done, and thou ſhalt be as brisk as they. Such is the Policy of the old Serpent, to get the young beginner into an Habit and Courſe of Sin, for he knoweth this is the way of hardening, and then he is almoſt ſure of a prey. It is acknowledged that Cuſtom will take of the Senſe of this Sin, as appears from *Eph.* 4. 19. But this is a long time in gaining, and thoſe ſtruglings in the mean while do annul the Pleaſure of it. Men think themſelves Wiſe and Happy, if they can once come to enjoy their Luſts without interruption, for then they imagine they have nothing to do with *the Powers of the World to come*, but are only for what preſent Pleaſure they can have. Whereas in Truth they have only *hardened their Hearts and ſhut their Eyes*, leaſt they ſhould repent and ſee the Evil: But ſtill it waits for them, and ſhall overtake them, whether they believe and conſider, or not. When the Eyes which they wilfully ſhut are ſunk into their Heads, and *their Hearts which they make as an Adamant*

Zech. 7. 12.

Adamant Stone ſhall be turned into Duſt, then their Souls ſhall ſee the Power of Gods wrath, and be ſo far ſoftened, as to be made ſenſible thereof.

Take a further view of that preſent Happineſs, theſe boaſt to have. It might have been delivered before, how Nature is nipt in the Bud, and blaſted like an untimely Fruit. Even young Marriages are prejudicial, much more are forbidden and irregular Luſts. He renders himſelf weakly and ſhort lived, loſes the delicate and ruddy Complexion, there ſucceeding a thin Paleneſs, and other ways ſoyls the Beauty of flouriſhing Youth.

The Lips of a ſtrange Woman drop as an Honey Comb, and her Mouth is ſmoother then Oyl, but her End is bitter as Wormwood, ſharp as a two edged Sword, Her Feet go down to Death. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the Door of her Houſe, Prov. 5. 3, 4, 5, 8. We may take his Word for it, who had experience of what he ſaid: Whoſe ſhame is publiſhed to the World, and ſtands a remarkable Penitent for this ſort of Folly. He gives warning of thoſe Evils which himſelf felt. The common Reply which hath been delivered down from one Adulterous Generation to another, is, I will do as *Solomon* did in younger years, and repent, as he did in Old Age: Then I will cry out, *All is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*, when I can follow Luſt no longer. Then thou wilt do a thing now, becauſe thou art reſolved to be aſhamed for it hereafter, and wiſh thou hadſt not done it; for ſuch muſt be true and unfeigned Repentance. And how can that be, when thou chooſeſt to do it now? To Sin with foreſight of future Repentance argues an evil intent of mind, ſo likewiſe it is an abſurdity. It is ridiculous to ſay, I will wound my ſelf, that I may go to a Surgeon, for thou wilt have a certain ſmart and pain, when thou mighteſt have continued whole; but how knoweſt thou *thy hurt may be incurable*, ſuch that the great Phyſitian of Souls hath vowed he will not heal, and he is not a Man that he ſhould Lie or alter his purpoſe. *To deſpiſe the Riches of his Goodneſs, or to continue in Sin that Grace may abound*, there is not the leaſt Encouragement from his Word or Nature, ſee *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. and *Rom.* 6. The Great God will no more ſuffer himſelf to be triſſed withal, then the mighty Ones among the Children of Men. Surely you have low Thoughts of him, if you Fancy to put him off after that manner, and huddle up your Peace with him whenſoever you would. You preſume upon this inſtance, but we are

not to Live, nor yet be judged by Examples, but by the written word of God. And what saith that? *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*, Exod. 20. 14. *Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with mankind shall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. This last is not to be understood absolutely, but unless true and timely Repentance doth interpose, as is evident from the Verse following. *And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* The Apostle speaks to all in General, as to Men and Women after their Conversion to Christianity, and so they were to continue unto their Lives end. If Men will Confess and forsake their Sins, endeavour to reclaim others, and at last leave it to God whether he will accept and Pardon them, as blessed be his Name, we have abundant assurances from his Goodness, Mercy and Truth that he will forgive such, then they may stand in Judgment. But who put off his Fear and Obedience with a jest or scornful Neglect; Let us alone we will Repent hereafter, who put a slight upon God, it is just to recompence them after their deservings, to let them run through that *space he gave for their Repentance, and they repented not.*

The Eye also of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight, Job 24. 15. those Intervals of Expectation are not so pleasant, Especially to him who hath disturbance and hurry of mind. A Cloud arises before the understanding that he can conceive nothing; he lies under the base Slavery of an imperious Will, hath discomposed and ruffled Affections: And several other things forego the gratifying a Lust, which occasion no little torment or disorder. What is it at the time, or rather instant? I have read that sinful Pleasure is sooner gone then well perceived, of so short a continuance that the end sticks to the very beginning, immediately after is annoy and loathsomeness: We may use as plain Expressions as we find in Scripture, *After* Amnon *had forced* Tamar *and lay with her, Then* Amnon *hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater the love wherewith he had loved her:* 2 Sam. 13. 14, 15. *And* Amnon *said unto her, Arise and be gone*, The expected Satisfaction is come to nothing, and the more often these Acts are repeated, the less Pleasure: Let the Objects be never so many, Ezek. 16. different or beautiful, that will not take away Nauseating. No Variety can satisfie the Cravings of unlimited Lust, or hinder

wearineſs. If he doth from the Similitude of Boars, Bulls, and forefooted Creatures (who go with their belly to the ground) plead for running after the whole Sex; but the Beaſts do it only to propagate their kind, neither do they joyn after conception; whereas he hath no ſuch end or confinement, for it is only to ſatisfie a worſe then brutal Luſt. The higheſt happineſs (if it may be ſo ſtiled) that Beaſts are deſigned unto, is meerly ſenſual; and therefore are allowed a more free enjoyent in theſe things then Man, who is a compound of Angel and Brute: As ſuch he is barely to uſe, and paſs by the delights of the one; but to aſpire after, and to finally reſt in the happineſs of the other. Sence was given us juſt to reliſh, but Underſtanding to enjoy: Men will catch part of a thing and run away with it, and then think they have a mighty Argument on their ſide (a frequent Policy in this diſputing Age) but take the whole together and that which ſeemed for, turns againſt them. The luſtful perſon fancies he hath the whole world of Creatures on his ſide, when further the greater part Copulate at ſet Seaſons, and other circumſtances may be found out to prove his mannner of doing more unreaſonable, and even in his lower inclinations to ſink beneath the Beaſts that periſh. He acts more fooliſhly and prepoſterouſly then they which have no Underſtanding. They do not ſhorten life and bring Diſeaſes upon themſelves, as Man doth: *'Tis he alone who turns Good into Evil, that is made miſerable by his Enjoyments*, God hath ſet a bound to them and then they are good, which the ſenſible Creatures keep within, but Man will leap over though it be to his own Ruine: What was given to refreſh and preſerve the kind, he makes an occaſion to deſtroy himſelf, and to produce none or an accurſed ſeed. *His Breaſts are full of Milk, and his Bones are moiſtened with Marrow*, Job 21. 4. But he drains it out wherein conſiſted his ſtrength: When every Drachm is continually exhauſted, the body becomes weak, and ſo more quickly drops into the Pit. And then it doth not only extract the ſound, but brings rottenneſs into the bones. 'Tis common that he who is addicted to this ſin gets a wonnd at laſt, which for ſweet repayes with bitterneſs. The joviality of Youth is changed into pains and languiſhing, *thoſe years are given unto the cruel, and thou mourn at laſt when thy fleſh and body are conſumed*, Prov. 5. 9, 11. That unſpeakable Pain and Wearineſs which ſome have laboured under for ſeveral Weeks, yea, Months together, ſeem to have a viſible pourtraiture of Hell Torments, (the difference being in the duration of them)

for

for here as much is endured as the weak body is capable of. *For the punishment of the iniquity of the Daughter of my People, is greater then the punishment of the sin of* Sodom, *that was overthrown as in a Moment, and no hands stayed on her*, Lam. 4. 6. But when one shall groan under continued Misery for half a Year and longer, when he shall be placed over the fire of Affliction as if baked in
Hos. 7. 4. an Oven, or being alive he is used in the same manner as the Carkasses of dead Beasts are; when the instruments of cruelty shall search into the members of Iniquity, and grate upon the most sensible parts; here is an aggravation of Misery, and it may be there is no remedy at last, die he must though with such Vexation and Lingring. Did any Martyr by close imprisonment, or thrown into the darkest and lowest Dungeon, there fed with Bread and Water, and after haled out to the most cruel Death, yet endure so much as this unhappy Creature hath done? He all the while enjoyed the liberty of the Sons of God, his Soul was free and lifted up with light from above, his Belly filled with hidden *Manna*, thence supported by the Power of Gods Grace, and after received into Glory. But the other Person did groan and Weep, still mindful of his Wretched condition, and every thinking did add unto his grief; he is gone and we know no more of him. Look into primitive story and find him out who suffered most for the Lord Jesus and his Kingdom; There have been likewise examples of those who have went through a more Fiery Trial and worse hardship, only for the sake of a base lust. Flesh and Blood will be apt to recoil and murmur, if we endure any thing for God though he is pleased to recompence exceedingly our light and short affliction; but if others endure ten times more in the slavery of Sin and the Devil, they take it patiently, though this is not half of what is to succeed in another place. Let none object to Christianity the Cross or Persecution, when greater trouble is annexed to one single sin, (and there is Misery linked to every one) then to the whole chain of Spiritual Graces and Duty. He that practises them all, finds less difficulty and tribulation, then some have done in accomplishment of lust; Many after long and painful contesting under it have been overcome, others have been put to more strugling and danger to prolong Temporal Life for a little, then the worthies of old to lay hold of Eternal Life. If some few have wholly escaped, those continual fears thereof did take away much of their conceived and unlawful Pleasures; If

God

God hath permitted them to act wickedly without bringing punishment upon themselves, let them look to it, unless they repent he will not spare them hereafter. If Judgment doth not begin in this life, it will be begun and never ended in that which is to come; in some who follow all iniquity with greediness, may be seen the fire already kindled, and if that be so intolerable now, what will it be when it shall burn out for evermore? By the Severity of Gods Wrath, consider of and fear his Indignation against sin. It is soon acted, but his Vengeance rests long upon the head of those who do the same; He hath manifested his displeasure by Judgments of old, upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, the death of *Zimri* and *Cosbi* and three and twenty thousand which fell in one day. It was the occasion that *Absolom* slew his brother *Amnon*; there are innumerable Examples in common History, and daily experience in all Places and Generations. Whether the aforesaid Disease hath been lately sent into the World to scourge the Transgressors of these worst Ages; or was known long since and those sayings in Scripture of *Rottenness of Bones, Body and Flesh consumed* have allusion to it, is not here determined. It hath, and doth torment these Workers of iniquity, and this plague will not be stayed till they cease from their evil doings; it brings Death or great Misery; at least it makes them sufficiently roar for giving way to a paultry lust. 1 Tim. 5. 24.

But what shall we think of those who have been cured and endured all this misery, yet will venture again? Surely it must be a transcendent delight and greater then all the pain that follows it, for otherwise none would choose it: And moreover old Persons who are disabled, will recount their pasts Acts with rejoycing, and please themselves with the remembrance: their old hearts run still after *Youthful Lusts*, their dim eyes are *full of Adultery*; all which doth seem to shew that great happiness doth arise from this sin, notwithstanding it is here endeavoured to be lessened.

To the first instance let it be considered, The greatest Torment and pain after it is over, is the very same as if it had not been at all. The anguish is forgotten, and nothing remains but a faint Memory which is rather pleasant; and therefore when this is laid in the Ballance, it will not weigh down the seeming pleasure of a present Temptation, which herein hath the advantage and thus prevails over Men: The inviting good is at hand, where-

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as the evil and inconveniencies are either paſt and then they are as nothing: Or elſe to come, and that is not already, or may not be, ſo it ſtands upon the ſame, yea, more unequal ground then the other did. Hence what is preſent is preferred before what may be hereafter; It is a thing only poſſible or contingent, and ſo may not happen: And therefore it is ſaid the luſtful perſon will venture again; for if he knew the like event would come upon him, he would as certainly refrain. The burnt Child dreads the Fire, himſelf alſo is more cautious and circumſpective ever after; If he doth greatly ſuſpect, he will decline, ſo that the evil in his own judgment is greater then the good, for he will loſe the certain enjoyment of a preſent Object, for fear only of the uncertain conſequence of the other. This is his Opinion in time of eaſe and delivery from former pain; but when he was ſmarting under it, then might be heard his true judgment of this matter. That curſing and indignation, thoſe real and then hearty reſolutions of never committing the like again do ſufficiently evidence the pain exceeds all the pleaſure. If he doth follow it again, it is becauſe that is vaniſhed and gone, but the other ſtands before him and ſolicites for entertainment. It is difficult for fleſh to reſiſt the charms of what ſeems amiable, eſpecially if it look only upon the firſt outward appearance (as the ſenſual Man looks no further) it doth aſſent. The deluſion and miſtake is, he caſts half and a partial Eye, There being in this and every Sin, *A mixture of ſeeming Good and real Evil:* The firſt Being open and viſible, the laſt ſomewhat more within not diſcovered, but by a diſcerning ſight, he juſt ſees what is lovely and will mind no more, but how to attain that; yea having a deſire after it, he is afraid to peep further, leaſt he ſhould find out ſomething to diſcourage from the other. Poor fooliſh Creature! Thou art afraid of loſing a Luſt which is a very little Good, conſequently miſſing thereof muſt be no great unhappineſs; and yet blindly dareſt upon a great Evil, which will make miſerable. Thou chooſeſt Sin for that little and preſent advantage, but knoweſt not, or doſt not conſider the ſad end thereof. And thus thou acteſt like ignorant Boys, who in Play and Sport pull down the Prop of Building, which falls and cruſheth them to Death. It is not prudent Choice but haſty inconſiderate doing; for if when tempted to this Sin, thou wouldſt ſtand ſtill and pauſe upon the manifold Evil conſequents thereof in this Life and that to come, thou wouldſt no more yield to it, then

make

make a mortal Wound in thy Body to drink thine own Blood which is ſaid to be ſweet, but the other will bring Pain and Death. Let none judge from the fooliſh Actings of Men, but from the reaſon of things.

And though ſome (which ſhould have more underſtanding becauſe of length of days and experience) yet have a mighty eſteem of theſe ſins, who are ſo far from coming to repentance, that they more harden themſelves and boaſt in Iniquity. They ſhould forſake when they cannot ſin longer, but we ſee by them this is not ſuch repentance as God will accept; for in Truth it is none at all: A change of Mind doth not follow from Diſability to Sin, nay there is only a ceaſing from the outward Act, for the heart and tongue which were *filthy, are filthy ſtill.* By ſuch a long and continued courſe, *they are hardened through the deceitfulneſs of Sin*; The Author to the *Hebrews* applies the Word to all indifferently, but this in a more eſpecial manner may be ſaid to be deceitful above all ſins. There is a ſtrange bewitching Nature in it, a Man is led from one ſinful Act to another, the next time he is promiſed more ſweetneſs from a different Object; if he is ſometimes ſtruck with the fear of Gods Vengeance, and he thinks of his ſin in order to Repent, then the Devil is not wanting to raiſe thoughts of former delight, and inſtead of recollecting them with horrour and deteſtation, he is well pleaſed with what he hath done, and cannot ſeriouſly repent of them if he would. Thence he concludes it impoſſible, and ſo goes on with hope to be excuſed, ſeeing he hath tryed to repent, though he is neither heartily Sorry for what he hath done, nor leaves it of: When formerly he might have refrained from the ſeveral Acts, and ſo by degrees have came to perfect Abhorrency and true Contrition. And now he might keep his Tongue from every filthy and idle Word, confeſs in the bitterneſs of his Soul inſtead of Glorying in his Shame, endeavour all ways to diſſwade others rather then allure them on. But commonly they are ſtill held Captive, and few do recover out of an habit of Luſt; *And I find more bitter then death the Woman whoſe heart is ſnares and nets, and her hands as bands, whoſo pleaſeth God ſhall eſcape from her, but the ſinner ſhall be taken by her*, Eccleſ. 7. 26. They cling and hamper ſo faſt, and the Man likes them, that there is ſeldom any eſcaping when he hath been long holden under them. As at beginning of this Iniquity they climb up from ſtep to another till they come to the height,

Heb. 3.

ſo they will continue there as long as they can. And when they muſt let go one or two rounds, they will hold faſt to the reſt; When Strength decays and Age comes on, they ſtill commit as much of the Sin as ever they can. Through theſe Mens Obduration and fooliſhneſs, others conceive abundance of Happineſs muſt flow from this muddy and ſtinking Fountain. But ſhall they be Judges who are given over to *vile Affections?* Who can no more know the true happineſs of Man then Brute Beaſts; if theſe dumb Creatures could ſpeak with Mans Voice, they might as well be called to give their Opinion, and then no queſtion the Hart or Goat would give a large commendation thereof. Who know nothing better, and whoſe capacities (once exalted and honourable) are ſunk into low and baſe luſts, have a mighty Valuation for them, this being the utmoſt and greateſt excellency they can attain unto.

They likewiſe who are now fallen into the midſt of theſe ſins, know of the things here ſpoken of; let them make all ſpeed to *Repent of the Uncleanneſs, and Fornication, and Laſcivionſneſs which they have committed*, 2 Cor. 12. 21. The Lord Jeſus will not condemn them *if they go and ſin no more*, John 8. 11. *Was not* Rahab *the Harlot juſtified?* And from the Examples of *Lot*, *David* we may be aſſured God hath Mercy on ſuch Sinners, if they do not abuſe his goodneſs, but leave off their Tranſgreſſion and do Works acceptable and holy in his ſight.

This full and plain manner of Writing was neceſſary to manifeſt the very Truth; let none ſuck Poiſon out of that which was deſigned for an Antidote, nor preſume to ſin yet more from what God knows was only intended to lead to Repentance. The temptation which leads Men over to theſe luſts, is that they think they ſhall be happy in ſo doing; here it is diſcovered to be a delution only, and Men would be more happy as to this preſent time, if they had nothing to do with them, or make uſe of the lawful remedy; there is the ſame invitation offered to leave of as before was to follow them. So much of luſt in the General, now briefly run over the particulars.

Of Adultery.

Every one knoweth what Adultery is: Stolen Waters are ſaid to be ſweet, and it is matter of ſport to beguile the poor Husband; Yet, O Man ſhalt thou boaſt for ever? Knoweſt thou not it will be bitterneſs in the end? Yea, there is Trouble and Vexation,

tion, Fear and Guilt all along. By the Jewiſh Law which was of Divine Appointment, *the Adulterer and Adulteress ſhall be ſurely put to death*, Lev. 20. 10. And ſo it is at this day in ſeveral Nations of the World, *Chriſtian*, *Mahometan*, and *Heathen*, but here it is rather faſhionable and of plauſible report. Whatever credit Adulterers or Adulteresſes get, it is only among the Children of Diſobedience, but the Righteous have them in Abomination; in this life they labour under continual Diſquiet, Tribulation and Anguiſh, everlaſting Shame and Contempt wait for them in that which is to come.

Of Fornication.

The injuſtice and wrong is ſomewhat leſs in Fornication, but it is a provoking ſin and offenſive unto God. *If any Man defiles the Temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy, for the Temple of God is Holy, which Temple ye are*, 1 Cor. 3. 17. *Flee Fornication, every ſin that a Man doth is without the body, but he that committeth Fornication ſinneth againſt his own Body*, 1 Cor 6. 17. A great part of the Chapter is againſt this particular; ſo that any thing may as well be denyed to be a Sin, as Fornication. If the Spirit of God ſaith it is a ſin, and wicked Men ſay it is none, *whoſe Words ſhall ſtand, his or theirs?* Jer. 44. 28, 29. And by whoſe Judgment muſt they abide? When he puniſheth for the ſame, let them diſpute away the Smart of it if they can; *Even as* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *and the Cities about them giving themſelves over unto Fornication, and going after ſtrange fleſh are ſet forth for an Example ſuffering the Vengeance of Eternal Fire*, Jude 7. The end of being ſet forth for an Example, is that others ſhould take heed; for the like will happen to them, if they do the ſame things. There doth too often go along with this an abomination of iniquity, as Murder in the Womb, thoſe preventives of getting with Child, and wicked means to cauſe Abortion or Miſcarrying; Moreover there is killing of Infants to hide their ſhame from the World, a manifeſt proof how tormenting this is that they dare upon ſuch Sinful and Barbarous Actions to conceal it. If they are not ſo unnatural and deſperately wicked as to ſtifle the poor Infant, then it remains a Witneſs of the Parents Tranſgreſſion: But if made away, that is a double ſin, and ſhall riſe up an evidence againſt them at the Bar of the General Judgment to their Eternal ſhame and confuſion before God, Angels, and Men. There are ſeveral other evils, too many to be recited, but may be known by obſervation

vation which do ſufficiently ſhew that it is beſt for Mankind to comply with *the Will of God, even your ſanctification that you ſhould abſtain from Fornication*, 1 Theſ. 4. 3.

Of Uncleanneſs. There are ſeveral ſorts of uncleanneſs, as *if a Man lie with Mankind as he lieth with a Woman, both of them have committed Abomination, they ſhall be ſurely put to death. And if a man lie with a Beaſt he ſhall be ſurely put to death, and ye ſhall ſlay the Beaſt*, Lev. 20. 13. 15. ſo that deſcribed, *Rom.* 1. 26. 27. There is another kind by ſelf pollution; *If there be among you, any Man that is not clean by reaſon of uncleanneſs that chanceth him by Night*, Deut. 23. 10. Which is no great fault, becauſe it is matter of infirmity, contingency and not wilfullneſs; but how much worſe is he who of ſet purpoſe forceth himſelf to be thus unclean? It is deteſtable to think or ſpeak of, much more it is to act ſuch things. *But Fornication and all Uncleanneſs let it not be once named among you as becometh Saints; Neither filthineſs nor fooliſh talking, nor jeſting which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks; for this know that no Whoremonger nor unclean Perſon hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Chriſt and of God.* Eph. 5, 3, 4. 5.

Of Laſciviouſneſs. Laſciviouſneſs imports Light and wanton Actions, Dalliances and rude Geſtures, luſtful Thoughts, immodeſt glances of the Eye, curious inſpection upon the faces of Women. *Whoſoever looketh on a Woman to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart*, Mat. 5. 28. Said Chriſt, who came to interpret ſome Laws, give others, and finally is to be the judge of all. Thoſe ſeveral Inclinations and Tendencies to unlawful luſt are comprehended under this Word. *When luſt hath conceived, it brings forth ſin; and ſin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death.* Jam. 1. 15. It ſuggeſting pleaſing thoughts will be apt to procure a conſent, which makes the ſin; and therefore ſhould be ſtifled in its firſt riſe. The way of avoiding Luſt, is to eſchew all occaſion and provocations thereof; The great deſign of the Goſpel is to prepare and bring People to Heaven; and then they muſt be pure and ſpiritual to fit them for the Holy of Holies, to qualifie them for the promiſe, *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God*, Mat. 5. 8. Now luſt and filthineſs is an hindrance to this, and therefore muſt be taken away, before we are made meet for the Celeſtial Happineſs.

To

To refrain from the aforementioned things, would be to deſtroy the Briskneſs and refined Breeding of the World, the principal whereof is to make complemental Addreſſes to young Women. What Mirth and Laughter do they ſtir up amongſt Promiſcuous Company of both Sexes? So the uſe thereof may appear not only agreeable to right Education, but alſo it conduces to divertiſement and happineſs.

It muſt be acknowledged that here and in other things, Chriſtianity is directly oppoſite to the preſent Faſhion: God and the World are contrary one to another, his thoughts are not as our thoughts, his commands are vaſtly different from the humours and actions of Men. *That which is highly eſteemed amongſt Men, is abomination in the ſight of God*, Luke 16. 15. So again, that which he commands and will reward, is accounted little and deſpicable among Men. But he hath the Breath of all the Sons of Men in his hand, which he can and doth take away in his own order. *Say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy Works! Through the greatneſs of thy Power ſhall thine Enemies ſubmit themſelves unto thee*, Pſal. 66. 3. in the Margent it is, *Yeild feigned obedience*. They ſhall be forced to it juſt like Captives led away by a more potent Enemy, for God will ſet himſelf in array againſt wicked Men. He will manifeſt his Power to their utter Confuſion; if they ſtill hate him, that will provoke him to Plague them yet more. Theſe things will certainly be; he might even now pour forth his full Diſpleaſure upon them, but he hath been pleaſed to permit *their hour and the Power of darkneſs*, Luke 22. 53. In which they might rebel againſt his Will, and not be immediately puniſhed. It is called *their hour*, a very little time in reference to Months and Years; and the whole Courſe of ſinning ever ſince *Adam* unto this Day, and what is yet more behind, is not ſo much as that in Compariſon of the Ages of Eternity. God now Commands, and either doth not at all, or very ſeldom here execute the Penalty of diſobedience, *Therefore the Hearts of the Sons of Men is fully ſet in them to do Evil*, Eccleſ. 8. 11. But when their ſhort time is ended, he will no more wave the Scepter of Juſtice or Mercy over their Heads, but then he will *Rule them with a Rod of Iron*. If they would obey his righteous Laws, to take off the ſmart from themſelves, yet he will not accept of their counterfeit and ſlaviſh Subjection, becauſe they would not when they might have performed unto him a Free and reaſonable Service.

Things

Things thus ſtanding, it is not Peeviſh Humour, nor Self-conceited ſingularity, but bounden Duty even at the preſent time, to hearken unto and obey our God when he ſaith, *Be not conformed to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that Good, and acceptable and perfect Will of God*, Rom. 12. 2. When the apprehenſive faculty is rightly ſet in Frame, it may judge this to exceed thoſe evil and ſinful Cuſtoms of People, in whatever Vogue and Eſtimation they are; for what are the Follies and Exorbitances of a wanton Age? How do they contribute to our real Happineſs? They may afford a faint and languiſhing Delight, but this (like giving a ſingle mouthful of Bread to an hungry Man) rather excites then fills the Appetite. It raiſes Anguiſh, for it is ſhort and inſufficient of a true Satisfaction.

Man is carried with a natural deſire towards the Female Sex, and therefore is more inclined to do all things to gratifie them. Indeed he doth well herein as long as he keeps within the ſet bound, but as in the beginning the Woman did prevail over the Man in the Tranſgreſſion, ſo doth ſhe now ſooner draw to Sin, then the common Temptations. *But ye Daughters of Sion, who are haughty and walk with ſtretched out Necks and wanton Eyes*, Whether have you cauſed your Shame to go? What is become of that Modeſty which formerly uſed to adorn the Virgin State? You ſeem to come near a *Whores Forehead, if you once refuſe to be aſhamed.* How can you admit of that looſe Language (which though *wrapt up*, Mic. 7. 3. in the Gentile way, is intelligible to thoſe Converſant therewith) or thoſe laſcivious Actions with young Men, which go under the Name of Play and Sport. The Virgins of old did fly from the leaſt familiar converſe with Men, and were never worſe eſteemed by them, but alſo given in Marriage. They did it when there was more invitation to catch at ad preſent Good; for there was not ſo much Manifeſtation of future Happineſs, but now *more Grace hath appeared to the World.* And whoſoever would have the Benefits thereof muſt both know, and alſo ſhew it by a ſuitable Converſation, that whilſt others *give themſelves over unto Laſciviouſneſs* (which is the firſt and next ſtep) *To work all Uncleanneſs with Greediness. But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 19, 20.

2 Kings 11. 4.

Iſa. 3. 6.

Let

Let Men consider what a meer Cheat the Devil makes use of to defraud them of a Kingdom, and drag down to the bottomless Pit. How they sell their Souls for naught, and delectable things which do not Profit. They may seem luscious to a meer Wanton, yet saith one, How sweet is it to want those Sweetnesses? To have Chaste reins and thoughts. Not to have the Soul defiled or darkened with the filthy smoke of Lust, but always continuing clear and bright. To be troubled with no Desires or Inclinations after strange Lusts. Either to have the gentle Stream run one way only, or to stand smooth and calm. The single Life is preferred in *Paul's* judgment, 1 *Cor.* 7. who there speaks by Permission and not by Commandment: If they continue spotless and innocent, they are Happy in so abiding. But if all were of this Opinion, *A Godly Seed* Mal. 2. 15. would be wanting: And Children would not be born to praise the Lord. It is his good Pleasure one Generation should succeed another; and therefore he also doth well, who is Instrumental to that. *Every Man hath his proper Gift of God; one after this manner, another after that.* If to one is given Continency, *He may serve the Lord without Distraction.* But where is not, there is an Expedient for him, even to have his own Wife. He is to remember the ends of Marriage, Procreation of Children, and to avoid Fornication; the bare quelling of Lust, and therefore this is not to be made an occasion of heightening it. In the Marriage Bed Temperance is to be observed. The great Happiness of this Condition arises from constant Love of one another, from the Endearment and Unity of heart and affections; not from the sudden and momentary Enjoyments, which also cease to be such, if repeated as often as strength and outward Provocation would give leave. Those Delights *perish in the using*, for they have no Relation or Affinity with the Happiness of Heaven. Indeed that is set forth by *Feasts, Wine, Riches* and *Honour*; so the Glutton, Drunkard, Covetous and Proud have an invitation by the Promise of the like things, but there is none to the lustful Person. The Son of God is not like the Impostor *Muhomet* (who draws principally with this Allective) for we are told before. In the *Resurrection they neither Marry nor are given in Marriage, but are like the Angels of God in Heaven*, Mat. 22. 30. *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh Abomination*, Rev. 21. 7.

A general Exhortation.

21. 7. What comes neareſt to his Delight is to behold the extraordinary Beauty of that place, which will raviſh the Eye and fill with wonder; this ſhall not be like gazing upon the Beauty of a Woman, but as one born blind who ſuddenly hath his Eyes opened and ſeeth the Sun in *its riſing Splendour*; which doth only tranſport the Soul with Admiration, and not affect the corporal faculties. At preſent it peeps through the Windows of the Body, ſeeing only the ſurface and outſide of things: The Fleſh alſo is weak and cannot endure an excellent Object. But when this Body ſhall be made ſpiritual, and that which now looks through two little holes, ſhall ſee through every part, and through into every Object, there it will be never tired: Eſpecially there being an infinite and inexhauſtible Fountain of Goodneſs and Glory. *Behold now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be: But we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 John 3. 3. Who is the Eternal, incomprehenſibly *Great* and *Glorious God*, and to ſee him as he is in his very Nature, will take up the whole length of Eternity. Whilſt we behold the ſum of all Perfection, the Quinteſſence of all Lovelineſs and Excellency, the Subject of all Good and Glory; who made, containeth, and is all things. He will be a moſt full and delightſome Object to ſhort and finite Creatures for evermore. My thoughts fail on this Subject, which it is not poſſible for the Heart to conceive, much leſs for Words to expreſs, *here we know but in part*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. And therefore am only to exhort the Reader and my Self, to uſe the utmoſt diligence that we may come to this Bleſſed Viſion. The way is ſhewed, *Every Man that hath this hope purifieth himſelf as he is pure*, 1 John 3. 4. *Having therefore theſe Promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting Holineſs in the Fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. So that the Adulterer, Fornicator, unclean laſcivious Perſon muſt ceaſe to do Evil, or he ſhall be ſhut out from this Glorious ſight: He muſt waſh, make himſelf clean, rub out the Defilements, Purge away all the remainders of ſinful Luſt; other wiſe he ſhall no more ſtand in the Preſence of the King of Glory, then now he can fly up into Heaven, and of his own ſtrength cauſe it to be opened to receive him. Who would loſe ſeeing him, that is ten thouſand times brighter then the Sun, only now for a little ſtaring upon well-coloured Duſt? Who would ſell his part in thoſe Celeſtial

Joys

Joys, which ſhall tranſport the Partakers with Exſtacy for evermore, for Gratification of a pitiful Luſt, which preſently vaniſheth and comes to nothing? If he is eſteemed a Fool that ſells the Reverſion of a great Eſtate (which would be certainly his own, if he would wait a little time) for a ſingle draught of Ale: A much greater is he who for a few, ſudden, fooliſh and empty Nothings, parts with his Birth-right to Heaven. Eſpecially conſidering further, that if he is deprived of that, he muſt take up his abode in a worſe place. *The abominable and Whoremongers ſhall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone*, Rev. 21. 8. Hearken you, that cannot deny a wicked Inclination, becauſe it is urgent and importunate, how can you endure to lye down under *everlaſting burnings*? The Pruriency of Luſt ſeems hard and grievous to you to be reſiſted, and do you not think it is much more to *dwell with devouring Fire*? What a ſad Portion muſt that Man have to ſubmit to thoſe Evils, he at preſent chooſes with the Sin, and then ſhall be given in full meaſure thoſe dreadful Threatnings which ſhall as certainly be fulfilled in their time, as we ſee of the things that have already been. It may be, thou ſtill cheriſheſt thy ſelf in thy ſweet Sin, accounting it the only Happineſs of Life, but it hath been weighed in the Ballance, and found light in Compariſon of that heavy Load of Guilt and Pain that follow at hand, but leſs and worſe then nothing of what is to ſucceed hereafter. *I have ſeen thine Adulteries, and thy Neighings, the Leudneſs of thy Whoredom, and thine Abomination on the Hills in the Fields: Wo unto thee, O* Jeruſalem *wilt thou not be made clean? When ſhall it once be*, Jer. 13.27.

CHAP. IX.

Of COVETOUSNESS.

COvetouſneſs is an inordinate Love and Deſire after Money, as when one is more earneſt after that then God and the things of his Kingdom. *The Covetous Man is an idolater*, Eph. 5. 5. and ſo *Col.* 3. 5. for he hath a greater Love and Veneration for corruptible Gold and Silver, then for the immortal God. *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, Luke 16. 13. Yet the laſt ſeems to be the Prince of this World, for it bears greateſt ſway. It Commandeth all things, procureth all things, hath in ſubjection Man and Beaſt, and hath exceeding Eſtimation; for what is due only to the Lord *Jehovah*, is applied ſecretly within *the Heart* to this *Idol*: How excellent is thy Name in all the Earth? Thus hath it robbed God of his Glory, for there is more Service and Valuation given to it by ſottiſh Children and blind Fools, then is had to the inviſible Being. Some through this are diſſemblers with God, who pretend to ſerve him, are zealous for the outward Ordinances, and abſtain from the chargeable Sins, but do *grind the Faces of the Poor*, Iſa. 3. 15. Cheat and defraud others, are greedy after Gain and uſe ſinful means. And yet ſeem to have a good mind towards God, for they are diligent in his Worſhip. *And they come unto thee as the People cometh, and they ſit before thee as my People, and they hear thy VVords, but they will not do with them; for with their Mouth they make a ſhew of much Love, but their Heart goeth after their Covetouſneſs*, Ezek. 33. 31. As if they could put a Cheat upon him alſo, by putting him off with good words only, when in the mean time they will think and do what they Liſt. *Thou underſtandeſt my thought afar off*, Pſal. 139. 2. At the very Riſe and Conception before we know it our ſelves. Let this be duly conſidered of by Hyppocrites and formal Profeſſors. It will not be accepted to be double-minded, to have one place for God, and another for the World. Neither is he to be thruſt

Ezek. 14. 3.

out

out from the Heart into the Mouth or Lips. He knoweth where he is uſed with neglect, and will recompence accordingly, as alſo where he is not *obeyed from the Heart*, and where he hath not the whole. The Commandment is repeated over and over. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul.* He requires to have the principal and whole place in Man, nothing to be preferred before him, and all things to be done in ſubſerviency to his Obedience. That which was given to Miniſter, muſt not ſet up for Rule. What he only allowed for Neceſſaries and Conveniences, that he might be ſerved in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the days of our Life, is not to come in for the main end, nor be made an occaſion to provoke him by iniquity and diſobedience. How unreaſonable is it, that a little yellow or white Duſt ſhould be preferred before God, who made Heaven and all things therein? They are accurſed who worſhip the Sun, Moon and Stars, which declare his Glory, but are not to deprive him of the leaſt degree of his own; much leſs may the ſmall things here below. God made us, preſerveth us, gives whatſoever we enjoy, and hath provided an eternal Happineſs hereafter, if we do not by ſuch groſs Demerits as eſteeming every little thing before him (which ſets forth the infinite Aggravation of Sin) forfeit our Right we have to his free and gracious Promiſes. If we might render to all their due, that juſt Eſteem they deſerve and no more. Now of God are all things, and therefore to him belong all Love, Fear, Honour, Praiſe, Obedience, and whatſoever we can do to expreſs our utmoſt Acknowledgment and Worſhip of his Divine Majeſty. Let us do as much as we can to acknowledge His Dominion and Property, and our own Subjection and Dependance. Let us have an exceeding high Opinion of whatever appertains to him, and then we ſhould have but a very little Opinion of all that is here in Compariſon of the *Great things of God.* Even in this wicked partial and idolatrous World, Dung is never preferred before Crowns and Scepters: And if the Eyes of our underſtanding were enlightened, and we did lift them up to the everlaſting Hills, we might apprehend ſuch unutterable things there, that we ſhould no more eſteem of the moſt magnified things of this World, then now we do the Stones and Earth we walk upon. But all Men have not Faith, who look upon this as meer Dreams and fine Fancies: Indeed few ſpeak out ſo, but many think thus in their minds, and therefore are for being ſure of

ſomething, letting alone theſe glorious Imaginations for ſuch who believe them. It is ſaid, there is one Nerve more in the Eye of Man then in Brutes, by which he is enabled to lift it up. If this be not loſt for want of uſe, look upwards in a clear Night, ye earthly minded. Obſerve the Firmament beſpangled with Stars, and do ye not really gueſs there may be above them ſome greater Excellency then Gold and Silver which Canker and Ruſt? *Seek him that mak'th the ſeven Stars and Orion*, Amos 5. 8. *whoſe is the World and the fulneſs thereof*, Pſal. 50. 12. and you muſt conclude he hath greater things in his diſpoſal, then what we now ſee or handle. Be not ſo raſh and fooliſh to perſwade your ſelves there are no ſuch things, becauſe you do not believe them; for in your Opinion it would be an odd kind of reaſoning, that there was no ſuch things as Riches, becauſe Beaſts know them not: And it is alike abſurdity to deny thoſe *true Riches* our Saviour ſpeaks of, *Luke* 16. 11. only for that covetous Worldings will not know nor believe them. If they will not, they ſhall loſe their part in them; and that will occaſion greater trouble, then now it is to miſs a good Bargain or Purchaſe. 'Tis perverſe Humour and Oppoſition to the Truth that any are unbelieving, for would they but impartially examine thoſe Evidences of Faith we have, they muſt fully aſſent: But this wicked and ſtubborn World is afraid the Goſpel ſhould be true, and therefore will not look upon its Pillars and Grounds of Truth, leaſt they ſhould be found too ſtrong, and then ſuch muſt not continue in Tranſgreſſion. They are willing to graſp and hold faſt what they have, and they take effectual Care not to attend to any thing, how true ſoever which may perſwade to the contrary. O profound Policy and Wiſdom! To refuſe to be Happy here and hereafter, becauſe by coveting after Riches they will pierce themſelves through with many Sorrows; and wilfully ſubject themſelves unto temporal and eternal Miſery, only to hug themſelves a little with ill gotten abundance. What unheard of Folly is this! There being ſet before the Sons of Men good and evil, they will loſe the one and incur the other, by conſidering of neither before-hand. Good God! That Men ſhould ſet at naught the moſt ineſtimable thing in the World, and yet blindly run upon accurſed Miſery. Reaſon it ſelf would tell them, that there is no harm to ſeek after the greateſt Good, and if it be grievous to think of the Evil, ſo they cannot endure that, how much more to ſuffer it? And they had better think thereof and ſo eſcape,

then

then (as now they do) ſhut it out of their Minds, and thus unavoidably run into it.

This may be applied to all manner of unbelief, Ignorance and Sin, but Covetouſneſs hath a mixture of all, for otherwiſe a Man would not renounce his part in the *Portion of* Iſrael for thouſands of Gold and Silver. Were he perſwaded he hath a Soul, and of its due worth, he would not loſe it to gain the whole World, when now he doth to get a leſs part thereof, then the point of a Pin is to an Acre of Ground. Covetouſneſs doth ſtrangely faſten the affections to the Earth, and takes them quite off from Heaven: The mind is daubed over with thick Clay that it conceives not Spiritually, and ſo intent upon things Temporal that he regards not the things Eternal. And thus comes in him *an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God*; Nevertheleſs let him ſtill know he is bound to obey the Commandments. If one hath never taken the Oath of Allegiance, yet he is obliged to keep the Kings Laws; if he doth not, he ſhall be puniſhed accordingly. So likewiſe, if one was never Baptized nor enters into Covenant with God, yet ſtill he lives under his Laws; *Every tranſgreſſion and diſobedience received a juſt recompence of reward*, Heb. 2. 2. He is Lord over all, the Great King of all the Earth, and requires ſubjection from every Creature; thoſe his Enemies which would not have him reign over them, he will ſend forth his Armies and deſtroy them. Who will not mind Scripture his revealed Law, are at this preſent tranſgreſſours againſt the ſame, and ſhall at the laſt day be condemned by it; *For the iniquity of his Covetouſneſs was I wroth, and ſmote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went frowardly in the way of his heart*, Iſa. 57. 17.

The iniquity of Covetouſneſs conſiſts in getting by evil and ſinful means as Falſhood or Wrong; ſo it is a complicated ſin of *inordinate Affection* and *Diſobedience*. Another kind of Covetouſneſs is gathered from 2 *Cor.* 9. 5. Which hinders from doing good by Charity, Hoſpitality, diſperſing abroad that others alſo may live by them. Many have plentiful Eſtates already, who think as long as they do not covet other Mens Lands or Money, nor do wrong, it is no harm to keep their own, to ſave and hoard up as much as they can. If they are willing to live in all good conſcience (as that will ſtand them in more ſtead in the day of their Death, and from thence throughout all Eternity, then Mannors or Lordſhips, and thouſands of Gold or Silver) then let them conſi- Col. 3. 5, 6.

der

der what they are to be put in mind of. *Charge them that are Rich in this World that they do good, that they be rich in good VVorks, ready to Distribute, willing to Communicate*, 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18. None hath more then what he may know to do withal; Others who have large Possessions find a way of disbursement through sinful Lusts and Pride. And shall not as much be done another way for a better Master, for Jesus and his Brethren? It ought so to be, and much more, and time will yet be, when they shall be ready to perform the same; Christianity is no Pinching Doctrine, for it doth not make the owners of Estates good Husbands, as the word is commonly used, but *good Stewards of the gifts of God.* They are not to heap to themselves and starve those round about them, but distribute Liberally according to what they have and others need. The eighth and ninth Chapter to the *Corinthians* is full to this purpose; God feeds the Fowls of the Air, Fishes of the Sea, Beasts and all Creeping things; Neither hath he left the principal work of his hands out of his care and protection: He hath given sufficient to all Men for Food and Raiment, and they have a right thereto He hath provided for them in his Works and in his Word; and was there a compliance to his Written Laws, none would suffer want. But seeing we live in an Age wherein Men are fallen away from God, who say they are Christians, but they are not, for they do not according to what is commanded, that is not done of all: Yet those *his peculiar People zealous of good VVorks*, Tit. 2. 14. are to shew forth more charity then is to be seen among them who think they have a well grounded hope for Heaven; and even those Rich Men who will not obey the Gospel may see it there Written, *That he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his feet*, 1 Cor. 15. 25. But if they will be wise as to submit and come in betime, let them hearken to what he saith, *Lay not up for your selves treasures upon Earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where Thieves break through and steal. But lay up for your selves Treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust do corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through nor steal*, Mat. 6. 19, 20. An express command against hoarding for the use of ones self. Our Lord in all the precepts he gave, hath consulted for the good of Mankind: Now it tends to the prosperity and welfare of a People, when Money is still in motion and passes from one to other; for if this were kept by every one that could, half the Nation would be in danger to perish. But our Religion hath enjoyned a free Communicative temper;

Psal. 45. 12

Psal. 140. 12.

per; it lays the greateſt obligation upon Men to Communicate forth according to what they have.

Some have been prejudiced againſt it as an Enemy to Trade, which is thought to be more maintained by Sin and Vanity, but let it be conſidered. The end of Trade is to get a living thereby, and that all People may have neceſſaries and comforts for their being here. Now the way God hath appointed, doth more contribute to all this then the corrupted courſe of the World. To inſtance in Drunkenneſs, which is reputed a beneficial ſin to the Nation. But if Men after they had kept within the bounds of lawful delight would go no further, and diſperſe ſome other way the Money thus ſaved, others might refreſh themſelves likewiſe, and there would be altogether the ſame vent. If that which is Prov. 31. 6, 7. conſumed by ſome in *adding Drunkenneſs to thirſt*, were given to ſatisfie the bare thirſt of others, there would be the like quantity expended as now, neither would that abundance of barley God hath in mercy given us, be wanted for want of uſe and receiving. It is a hard Caſe for thoſe *which make Oil within their VValls, and tread their VVine preſſes, and ſuffer Thirſt*, Job. 24. 11. Honeſt labourers, who take pains in ſowing and cutting down the Corn ſhould have more ſhare thereof then ſqueezing Landlords do now ſuffer them to have; when themſelves neither Reap nor Sow, but eat of other Mens labours. *Thou ſhalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn; doth God take care of Oxen?* 1 Cor. 9. 9. Much more for thoſe of his own likeneſs. Many are forced to eat and Drink very courſe Bread and Water or Beer not much differing from it; theſe alſo deſerve help not pity, and ſhould come in for a diſtribution of the good things, *for the Earth is the Lords and the fulneſs thereof.* In the Primitive Church they had a Feaſt, where poor and rich did ſit down promiſcuouſly together, but there was a fault that *in eating every one taketh before another his own Supper, and one is hungry, another is drunken*, 1 Cor. 11. 21. It is more Unreaſonable and Antichriſtian that ſome ſhould live in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, others pine in Hunger and Thirſt; But the Goſpel ſets this at right by paring away the Superfluity of the one, and giving it to others. So it may be ſaid to the Vanity and inordinacy of Apparel. *Thy People alſo ſhall be all righteous*, Iſa. 60. 21. And then there will not be ſuch a Catalogue of Womens Bravery, Iſa. 3. and more things added thereto by the Faſhion of theſe times. As iniquity hath

hath abounded ſo the number of thoſe have increaſed of that Trade which Borders upon it, but ſome of them might have reſorted to other Employments, and thoſe might ſell nothing, but what was really uſeful and decent. Were the ſame ſpent in Hoſpitality and Charity, as is now in Gluttony and Drunkenneſs. Were the ſame laid out in Clothing the naked, as is *in ſtrange Apparel*, Zeph. 1.8. Did every one expend to ſome good uſe and purpoſe, what others do in Pride and Vain Glory. Were every one liberal according to what he hath, and Covetouſneſs (*which is not to be named amongſt Saints*, Eph. 5.3. but found among Hypocrites and Unbelievers) utterly baniſhed from among us: There would be better Living, then in this World of iniquity. *Righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation, but Sin is a reproach to any People*, Prov. 14.34.

Covetouſneſs is the Plague-ſore of the Commonwealth, who is addicted to it will *make empty the Soul of the Hungry, and he will cauſe the drink of the Thirſty to fail. The Inſtruments alſo of the Churl are Evil, he deviſeth wicked Devices to deſtroy the poor with lying Words, even when the Needy ſpeaketh right*, Isa. 32.6, 7. The covetous Man doth not only diminiſh the Livelihood of the Poor, but is ſtill ſpeaking againſt them when they ſeek for honeſt relief, and is upon Deſigns to make them yet more low. He gets all that he can from others, and nothing is to be had from him, but for things of abſolute neceſſity. If he is of ſufficient Eſtate already, then he injures by ſordid keeping his own, by raking clean, and *leaving no Gleaning to the Poor*, he doth no good, not ſo much as with the Superfluities of his Eſtate, but lays up for further Purchaſes. *Wo unto them that joyn Houſe to Houſe, and lay Field to Field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midſt of the Earth*, Isa. 5.8. The Scripture doth not ſay any thing in vain, for all muſt be fulfilled. It is too well known already, that a covetous Man whether of the greater or leſſer ſize is far from doing Good to others, that he is very prejudicial to Community.

All the pretended good is to himſelf, and he hath a conceited Happineſs. If there was a ſtrife among the Sins which was moſt delightful and expedient to ſingle Perſons, Covetouſneſs would have the more general Approbation, for it ſeems to bring more durable good by getting Money, which prevents all the diſcontent and murmuring occaſioned through want thereof, and furniſheth with all the neceſſary helps for wordly Happineſs. The wiſer ſort are given to this, whilſt they laugh at the vain gayeties and unſatis-

unſatisfying pleaſures of others, how they deſtroy themſelves in purſuit of thoſe things which do not profit, when they can wax rich and live long. There is a laſting and real pleaſure in this, as in other works of the Fleſh.

It is granted that all ſin hath ſome delight or conveniency, but then the pain and evil is much greater; and ſo it is here, for Covetouſneſs doth outwardly make a ſhew of Happineſs and Wiſdom, but when a little laid open, there may be ſeen more miſery and folly.

The love of Money is the Root of all evil, which while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many Sorrows, 1 Tim. 6. 10. The immediate grief of the Soul is irkſome as pain of body, and Covetouſneſs cauſing that is equally afflicting, as what only brings trouble to the fleſh. Whatever delight ariſes from this ſin, is cheifly by adminiſtring proud and pleaſing thoughts, and the Torment which doth accompany it, is alſo by Vexation of Spirit. Cares and diſtraction do prey upon the inward parts. The Man is as it were torn aſunder with anxious forecaſting how to accompliſh more gain. Some thoughts pluck one way, ſome another, then are perplexing fears leſt he ſhould chooſe the worſt way, there is agitation and reſtleſsneſs of mind till he is reſolved upon ſomewhat, and again trembling ſucceeds of the event. It may be after all he is diſappointed of the expected lucre: When the affections are extreamly ſet upon a thing, there is proportionable grief to miſs of it; and it is a further aggravation, if it might have been had unleſs for ſuch a miſtake and foolihneſs. This often happens to every one that is greedy of gain, for he doth not catch all he hunts after, ſo he ſuffers Wearineſs in the purſuit, and more Sorrow in the loſs thereof. But when he doth obtain, doth not that make amends for other diſappointments? Indeed there is ſome comfort when things happen according to deſire, but then likewiſe is more trouble when they do not; one gainful deſign that is defeated, brings more Torment then twenty which ſucceed well. A little evil will counterpoiſe much good, for that makes a laſting and deep impreſſion of Sorrow, when this doth only cauſe light and ſudden degrees of Joy; Which proceeds from Mans corruption and punihment ſince the fall, and inſtructs him if he would learn ſo much, that *his Happineſs is not of this*

World. It is ſo in them who have their affections moſt regulated, but much more where thoſe are looſe, head-ſtrong and outragious.

The covetous cannot obtain all he propoſes to himſelf; Many things are out of his power, and what are in, there are ſeveral accidents and hindrances which grieve him at the heart. Moreover, Fire, Theft, Deceit, Tricks and Law-Suits, and ſuch like things, do often rob and ſpoil of a conſiderable part he poſſeſſes. It is irkſome to reflect that what was gotten with ſo long pains and diligence, ſhould be thus taken away; If the murrain falls upon his Cattle, a blaſt or unſeaſonable Weather upon his Corn, he never thinks upon God ſo much as then, for his heart to fret and conceive horrid Imaginations which he is ready to out with (the Lord knows them all one as if he did) but refrains, for he would meet with the utmoſt deteſtation amongſt Men if he ſhould through his own covetous mind Blaſpheme the Holy one of *Iſrael*. If he doth not come up to this Abomination of Wickedneſs, yet who is beſotted to his abundance cannot endure any part thereof to be diminiſhed without impatiency and murmuring. He hath ſufficient left in anothers Opinion, but not in his own, and therefore is enraged; O if it had not been for this pull back, how wealthy he had been; why you are ſo ſtill, ay, but he had been more wealthy, and there is the Vexation. When that is taken away which was glewed in, it is as if part of his heart was rent away therewith.

It is a leading ſtep towards Happineſs for a Man to order aright his deſires; if theſe are fixt upon a ſure and laſting good that cannot be ſhaken, then he is happy; but if he will let them out only upon an appearance of good, which beſides is tottering and moveable, then his happineſs is ſuch alſo, a meer deluſion, uncertain and without. It may be compared to a Wave of the Sea driven with the Wind and toſſed. Sometimes it is near, and again afar of: *Labour not to be rich, and ceaſe from thy own Wiſdom, Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themſelves Wings, they flee away as an Eagle towards Heaven*, Prov. 23. 4, 5. They are from without, and who places his love upon them, it muſt be ſubject to the ſame inconſtancy. They being in a continual ebb, the Mans Soul moves with them, being now a little puſt up and then is brought low. He is ſharraſſed between

tween joy and grief, the one lifts up the Waves when there is emptineſs underneath; the other preſſes down with full and real cares, which being cloſe and compact ſit heavy and grievous upon him.

Suppoſe a Man ſet on work to make an endleſs Chain which he begins link by link, ever and anon one which he hath already made is broken, which is vexatious to go back and mend. If he doth daily add more, and make it longer, yet he will never have done, for it is endleſs. He vainly pleaſes himſelf with the additions he makes, but cannot come to true contentment; for he will never ſee an end of his labour, and at laſt if it ſhould reach from one corner of the Earth to the other, it would not fill his mind. In like manner, he that gathereth Riches doth often loſe ſomewhat he hath already gotten, this is diſquietude; If he doth daily make his heap greater, he hugs himſelf with a ſlight fancy or Opinion, but when will his work be at an end? For there is more to be gotten ſtill. If he ſhould compaſs Sea and Land, get the whole World into his poſſeſſion, yet all would not ſatisfie his Soul. If raiſed up to its due pitch, all the Gold of *Ophir* cannot ſatisfie her exceeding deſires, which reach after greater things. Do ye think thoſe who have the Stars under their feet value theſe little things here below? The faithful Chriſtian whilſt in the body with his mind aſcends up, and thence caſts a contemptuous eye upon the little dazling things here, with which he thinks irkſome to abide. A Cheſt cannot be filled with Wiſdom, nor a Bag with underſtanding, no more can the Soul with the corruptible things of Gold and Silver.

I may here appeal to the unbelieving earthly Man (who makes the worſt uſe of reaſon by employing it to ſo mean purpoſes as to *lade himſelf with thick Clay*. Is there need of much ſtudy and polite learning to fill a Dung-pot?) How much haſt thou got already? If a cart-load of Coyn and many thouſand Acres of Land, yet doſt thou not covet more? *Haſt thou not pulled down the Old, and built greater Barns?* Haſt not thou forgotten thy former little requeſts, and is not thy appetite ſtretched out larger to receive yet more? The greater extent his Eſtate is of, the more parcels of ground lye adjoyning to them, which would be *Commodious*; and ſo he is led on with endleſs deſire. Well, reflect upon them altogether, and do they yield true and real contentment? Are thy deſires abated with daily Multiplying? It is ſtrange that a reaſonable Creature

ſhould ſet his Love upon, and be hankering after that which doth not ſatisfie. When he hath long tryed and cannot ſtop the leaſt craving, yet ſtill to go on, making it the more importunate and urgent. If thouſands of Gold and Silver will not content a ſingle Deſire, how can it be expected, that adding a few hundreds more ſhould preſently dam up the whole Current of them? If a Gallon of drink will not quench the Thirſt of a Dropſie, much leſs will a ſpoonful. There is a wrong Application and Remedy to cure the diſeaſe of the mind; for ſo it may be here called, in that it doth torment, and only through this miſtake bring evil upon Men. That conſtant and endleſs Thirſt after Happineſs, They do not take the right Courſe to allay, or to obtain what they ſo much long after. Some make uſe of one thing, ſome of another; but here the Man trys if he can do it with inconſtant and periſhing Riches, ſo unſutable; but further becauſe the thing to be redreſſed is within, and this is without. Was ever ſuch Sottiſhneſs, when one is ready to periſh with Hunger and Thirſt, only to give him Gold to ſmell unto? And there being as natural a Deſire in the Soul after Happineſs, as the Body after Food and Moiſture, how can Money truly eaſe that which is of a more noble and different Nature, when it will not ſo much as the earthly part of us? What Pleaſure is to behold that, when the Sun and other parts of the Creation are a more excellent Object? What advantage to claim Property in that, wherein is no real Worth and Excellency?

It is not ſo much the glittering of Gold for that becomes *Dim*, nor the fine colour of Silver for that appears as *Droſs*, which doth raviſh the Eyes; but the *Pride of Life* invites, and then Covetouſneſs begins. When it is conſidered how much reſpect it Commands, how ſuch an one is honoured by the People becauſe he is Rich, this raiſes in another a Deſire of being ſo likewiſe. The Nature of Man is very prone to Pride, he Aims at ſomething wherein he may exceed the reſt of his Brethren; and this vain perſwaſion of Happineſs puts them upon their ſeveral Deſigns. Learning is eſteemed but Pedantry, by thoſe who do not underſtand it: Wiſdom is juſtly preferred before Rubies, but that is ſtretched up above preſent things, and few do apprehend its excellency, becauſe there is no ſuch viſible advantage. Honour is a puff of Breath and the appendant of Riches; ſo they have the precedency before all things, and thence moſt try to abound with them.

Prov. 8. 11.

Behold his Soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: But the juſt ſhall live by his Faith: Yea alſo, becauſe he tranſgreſſeth by VVine he is a proud Man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his Deſire as Hell, and is as Death, and cannot be ſatisfied, but gathereth unto him all Nations, and heapeth unto him all People, Hab. 2. 4, 5. An exact Deſcription of the great and covetous Man; He is exalted and grown ſtately, if he hath a large Eſtate already, then he will not deny himſelf the beſt Liquors, but take them of to Drunkenneſs; he doth not value to ſave ſo ſmall a Matter, as that would amount unto: He is not contented with his own Poſſeſſions, but goes abroad, and ſeeks for new Purchaſes. Shall we therefore conclude him to be an Happy Man? No more then the Grave is filled, if Carkaſſes are daily put into it, for it is ſtill open for more. When he obtains he hath not enough; he was impatient before, and reſtleſs now. All inordinate Affection hath torment according to its Being more or leſs inordinate: And why then ſhould a Man heighten that in himſelf, ſeeing thereby he increaſes his own Miſery? If he were ſo eagerly deſirous after ſome real good thing, this were not to be blamed: For though there is Vexation in being ſo, yet if the thing be had it recompences; if not, the Expectation did ſomewhat leſſen, and it is ſome Comfort at the laſt, that he did not *Labour for the VVind*, it would ſtand him in ſtead if he had accompliſhed it. But when one runs ſo earneſtly after an appearance of Satisfaction that hath often deceived him; when he hath propoſed in the mean while ſuch Contentment, yet hath been as often diſapointed; and of this he may be every day more convinced, yet ſtill to go on. What doth all this, but fulfil the Scriptures, *Their Silver and Gold ſhall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord: They ſhall not ſatisfie their Souls, neither fill their Bowels: Becauſe it is the ſtumbling block of their iniquity*, Ezek. 7. 19. *Behold is it not of the Lord of Hoſts, that the People ſhall Labour in the very Fire, and the People ſhall weary themſelves for very Vanity?* Hab. 2. 13. According as his Divine Wiſdom hath eſtabliſhed things, and all to bring back to his Obedience, that they may *go and return to their firſt Husband, for then was it better with them then now*, Hoſ. 2. 7.

There is an Enemy which lets from this; and he whiſpers to thoſe he withdraws, that hence it appears there muſt lye hid ſome great Good, which they cannot have before they have long wreſtled.

wreſtled. He would fain inſinuate of a Satisfaction behind that will not be had, unleſs they take Pains for it, and the greateſt things are reſerved at laſt. If the covetous Man could get ſo much, then he would have Happineſs and Contentment. That at length is obtained with much Sweat and Drudgery, but then his mind is altered, he hath need of more, and ſo on; he hath not yet laid hold of that Satisfaction he looked after, it is further off ſtill, and ſo continues to make towards it. Thou miſtaken Fool! There is neither Satisfaction at the end; and if there was, thou couldſt not come to it. How much doſt thou propoſe to thy Self? Why, another hath the ſame already, and he is not ſatisfied; and why ſhouldſt thou in the ſame Condition? Thou haſt lower Thoughts, but they will Riſe with thy Wealth, and if thine ſhould come to be equal with his, thy Thoughts would be the ſame alſo. *He that loveth Silver ſhall not be ſatisfied with Silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increaſe: This is alſo Vanity*, Eccleſ. 5. 10. Every one crys for what is ſufficient, but how much is that? If it were ſtated according to the deſires of Grace, Nature, and Conveniency, it might be quickly had. If People would uſe only Honeſt and diligent Endeavours in their Calling, and expect Gods bleſſing, let him judge what is the Competency, and not we our ſelves. But if it is meaſured by the covetous Mans Opinion, when he ſhall ceaſe to ask any further, then is no hope to obtain it: For he may as well think when he goes as far as he can ſee, that he ſhall touch the Horizon, as that he ſhall be ſatisfied, when he gets what he now propoſes within himſelf? If any do deſiſt in going after Wealth and the Promiſed ſatisfaction thereof, it is not becauſe that it is obtained, for the uſe of Riches as they Subminiſter all Plenty of Meat, Drink, and Raiment do content the Body, but will not throughly ſatisfie the mind of Man, much leſs will the bare keeping of them in a Cheſt. What doth it ſignifie if one hath a rich Neighbour, and finds no benefit at all by him? And it may be the ſame if not worſe (for the Fear and Care of loſing Property Torments more, then the Priviledge of having it amounts unto) *with the Man to whom God hath given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, ſo that he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that he deſireth, yet God giveth him not Power to eat thereof, but a ſtranger eateth it; this is Vanity, and it is an evil Diſeaſe*, Eccleſ. 6. 2.

Be exhorted to put an end to thy Covetouſneſs and weariſome Labour. *Wo to him that increaſeth that which is not his, how long? And to him that ladeth himſelf with thick Clay*, Hab. 2. 6. Thy Life draws to an end, and then it is not thine; how ſoon thy years may be run out, thou knoweſt not. Conſider to what purpoſe do you conſume ſtrength and time? Shall you give account to God how careful you have been to the World, and in the letteral Senſe of the Parable, *VVhat a good Servant you have been? How thou haſt put thy Money to the Exchangers and Uſury*, and haſt gotten ſo much by other ways of dealing: God doth not require any to be Rich, but all to be innocent. He would have his Servants do that he gives them in Charge, *viz.* Obey his Commandments. When he calleth to Account, Then it will be demanded, whether we have *inclined our Hearts to his Teſtimonies, and not to Covetouſneſs*: Whether we have loved Gold more, or it hath divided our Love with God; whether we have broken his Commandments for Gain, or neglected Duty for preſent advantage? Such things will be required. Wherefore let him that been an *idolater or unrighteous*, repent and be ſo no more. Do not tranſgreſs the leaſt Precept for the greateſt Profit. *The getting of Treaſures by a lying Tongue, is a Vanity toſſed to and fro of them that ſeek Death*, Prov. 21. 6. You muſt ere long part with whatever you have, and have a Care you do not loſe your ſelf. You will be ſtript naked, deſtitute and forſaken of all, and how ſad would it be, If you ſhould be condemned for what you muſt leave behind, and cannot carry with you? *VVaſh ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, plead for the VVidow*, Iſa. 1. 16, 17. Leave off your former Greedineſs and unjuſt Dealing, be bountiful and Charitable, Act with all good Conſcience and Honeſty, ſtand up for them you have wronged heretofore. And which ſhould be done in the firſt place, (*for Mercy is before Sacrifice*, and Juſtice before Alms giving) Be ſure to make reſtitution and ſatisfaction for all the injury you have done according to *Numb.* 5. 7, 8. Do not think to *bring the price of a VVhore or a Dog*, to give Alms of Goods unjuſtly gotten: *If ye be willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat the good of the Land. But if ye refuſe and rebel, ye ſhall be devoured with the Sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it*, Iſa. 1. 19, 20. Under the ſhew of temporal Calamity, the eternal threatning of God is vailed throughout the Old Teſtament. It is a little more

Mat. 25.

See Deut. 23. 18.

drawn

drawn aſide, *Iſa.* 33. 14. but expreſſed in the moſt plain words under the Goſpel. God is truth and hath not frightened People with a Lye: He who is as good as his Word in all things, (as all believe he is in his Promiſes) doth not threaten that which is not, or he will not perform. It is a ſad adventure for any one to run, either God muſt prove a Lyar, or himſelf be turned into Hell; he might equally throw himſelf into the Fire to try if it will not burn, *For our God is a conſuming Fire*, Heb. 12. 29. And ſo will at length appear to the miſerable experience of the ungodly and diſobedient; that they may tremble and fear to continue ſo. Will they not be perſwaded to make all haſte to flee from that? Whereof the thoughts only are ſo very diſmal, that People are afraid to entertain them, but take no due Care to eſcape the thing it ſelf. That which is irkſome to the apprehenſion, will be much more to the Senſe; and what is dreaded afar off, will be more terrible when it comes nigh. It vexes now the thought for a moment, but will be more tormenting when it comes to be in reality for evermore. The ſureſt way never to come to Hell, is to hear of it often; and this is a thouſand times better than not to ſuffer the bare Report, but blindly go on and drop into it. It is better to be foretold and foreſee, and ſo avoid; then run on Deaf and Blind to the place they did ſo much fear, whilſt it was but in ſight and hearing. The froward hardened Sinners will neither think of, nor let another tell them what they are liable unto; whereas this would ſomewhat remove their Obſtinacy and Senſleſneſs, and then way is made for Gods Grace, and *ſo they might be ſaved.*

It is almoſt the ſame thing to ſpeak to an Herd of Cattle as Worldly Men; they will keep their head downwards a grazing, and theſe will mind their ſinful gain let what will be declared unto them. *And the Phariſees alſo who were covetous, heard all theſe things, and they derided him*, Luke 16. 14. They may put off a conviction with a ſcorn and neglect; Others know not what this means. Unregenerate Men who have long continued ſo, and their hearts are pinioned to the World, underſtand not much more of Spiritual things then Beaſts do of reaſon. But God will take care that what he hath ſaid ſhall come to paſs: And thoſe who are ſo ſtout now to value his Words as an inſignificant ſound or dead letter, may at length find they will cauſe an hideous yelling in themſelves, and be *a ſavour of Death unto Death*: As the Words in a Statute Book do now cauſe ſeveral to ſuffer loſs of Liberty, Life and

Ezek. 6. 10. & Dan. 12. 9

and Member and other ways of Puniſhment: from Truth all that is rightly inferred, is Truth. Let people *reſiſt the Truth*, 2 Tim. 3. 8. or diſregard it, ſtill that remains, and however in the mean while ſtifled or prevaricated, that will riſe up at the Judgment of the Great Day. Whether they will read or not, theſe words are laid before them, that they might have turned from their evil ways.

Take heed and beware of Covetouſneſs, for a Mans life conſiſteth not in the abundance of things he poſſeſſeth, Luke 12. 15. 'Tis enforced with a double caution to prevent the leaſt beginning thereof, and an excellent Reaſon added. And though the Wiſdom of the World ſeems to confront this, for they would account none truly Wiſe, but who gets Riches, and ſo again whoſoever doth, he muſt be neceſſarily Wiſe; yet as ſure as God is, and we have any Revelation from him, there is another Notion of Wiſdom. Man was ſent into this World, and endued with underſtanding that he ſhould be Wiſe. He is not to continue here, but only paſs through and ſo away. Now that he ſhould do nothing but pick up Dirt in the Road, ſeems a moſt Senſeleſs thing: For though he was made of Earth, yet this here treated of is no part of his Nature: it neither came into the World with him, nor ſhall go out with him. Our days fly as a Poſt till the laſt cometh, and in that day all our Thoughts ſhall periſh, all the Labour we have taken under the Sun ſignifieth nothing. The end of that was to Miniſter things for Life, but when this is demanded, all thoſe things likewiſe vaniſh which did relate thereunto: there is no more riſing up early to eat the Bread of Carefulneſs, Bodily work ceaſeth, Worldly buſineſs is at end. It avails not to have been cumbred about many things, to have heaped up Riches and gotten Gain. A Man ſhall not by having ſo done redeem his Soul, nor give to God a Ranſom for it: But he is to be examined, whether he was more employed about the one thing needful, which ſhall not be taken away, and will ſtand in ſtead, when all theſe things ſhall fail. When a Man comes to die, if he had all Pleaſures, Riches and Honours, he is not therefore in a better Condition; much leſs is he who hath beſtowed all his time to be a little more Rich then his other Neighbours, and for this he hath forfeited his Right to the Heavenly inheritance, which otherwiſe he might have been Partaker of. He counted himſelf a cunning Fellow whilſt he lived, becauſe he knew how to get Money and keep it, thinking Jer. 51. 13.

thinking others Fools who had not ſuch a high value thereof as himſelf. And perhaps, thought them unwiſe who mind Religion, which was an hindrance to Gain, and alſo Chargeable, he did not ſee them get any thing by it: Whilſt he letting alone Words, did Compaſs real and ſubſtantial Coyn: For all he hugs himſelf ſo much in his own Wiſdom, he ſhall be the meereſt Fool. He is ſenſible what a Vexation it is to loſe a Pound to ſave a Penny (for this commonly happens to covetous Niggards) and the torment will not be leſs when he ſhall come to know, that for a little earthly Pelf he is deprived of a Kingdom. The opinion of the World is, if they ſee one always diligent in buſineſs and he grows Rich, they conclude him to be a very Wiſe man; another doth not neglect his Calling, but Labours therein ſo far as to provide things neceſſary and convenient. But in the firſt place doth carefully obſerve his Duty towards God, and will ſometimes loſe a temporal Profit, rather then let ſlip an opportunity of doing his Soul good, him they term a fooliſh and ſimple Fellow. Whatever Men think now, at length it will be plainly diſcerned between him that ſerveth God, and who ſerveth him not, and which of the twain is moſt Wiſe. Even now we perceive the one hath hopes in his Death, the other goes away not knowing what ſhall become of him. Men think it enough if they do but mind their buſineſs whilſt they live, beſides they underſtand not what they ſhould do; but what Wiſdom is it to be employed about that, which ſhortly ſhall ceaſe, ſeeming all one as if it had not been at all, and to leave that undone, for which they muſt eternally ſuffer? They have nothing to truſt unto but this Life, of which they are not aſſured for a Week nor a Day, before they are convinced of the greateſt and Remedileſs Folly that ever was.

For their Wit and Contrivance in getting Money: It is to be obſerved how corrupt Nature is carried violently to evil. It is eaſie to Swim with the Stream, ſo to find out thoſe crafty and hidden things of diſhoneſty. They are learnt from one to another, any one may know them, that will look into the Practiſe of the World. And the Devil will be ready to ſuggeſt more. However it ſignifies little if he is Wiſe in the way, if he is not ſo in the end. He who makes a Journey to ſuch a place to no purpoſe, if he doth go the right and neareſt way, is a Fool for all that. And if Covetouſneſs is not the principal buſineſs, and end of Mans Life, he can never Act prudently who Labours for it all his days, though

though with the utmoſt Skill and Dexterity. He that is very diligent in gathering Straws, and leaves none behind him, will never paſs for a Wiſe man. Let the bundle be every day bigger, yet if never ſo great, it is all to a vain Purpoſe.

The reſult of the whole is, that God hath provided for mankind *Bags which wax not Old, a Treaſure in the Heavens that faileth not*, Luke 12. 33. unto which he now calls and invites them to accept of: in the mean while he Commands to abſtain from what is an hindrance to this, which alſo is hurtful and diſquieting. It is better truſting unto him, then ſeeking unto the Creature: His Goodneſs and Wiſdom are juſtified; yea, to be admired and complyed withal. *Let your Converſation be without Covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch things as ye have: For he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee*, Heb. 13. 15.

CHAP. X.

Of Anger, Wrath, Hatred, Malice, Envy.

BEfore hath been conſidered that inordinate Love and Deſire after Meat, Drink, Women and Money, the ſeveral Idols of this lower World, which draw after them ſuch a multitude of Followers by holding forth the outward ſhew of *Good* and *Happineſs*. But upon the ſtrict and through inquiry every one muſt acknowledge, it is not in me. The Man is cheated all the while; he may ſtumble over, among, and within them all, ſeeking Reſt and finding none. God is the chief and only Good, Who ever left him and proſpered? It is as impoſſible to be Happy without him, as that there ſhould be light of Noonday, when the Sun is under this part of the Earth.

Nothing is more miſerable, and yet nothing more Proud then Man, was the obſervation of a very Heathen; but we know whence to derive this accurſed Nature. It came down from his Forefather, who would be *as Gods knowing good and evil*, Gen. 3 5. the Author of his own Happineſs: We are his Children, and would be working it out of our ſelves. Let the only Wiſe God declare unto them, it is in the way of his Commandments, that he is the Lover of mankind and ordained ſuch for their Good, yet they will think otherwiſe, and ſo deſpiſe his Wiſdom and Truth. Which is ſuch an iniquity as themſelves ſhall find their own Conceit of Happineſs to be Folly, falſhood and diſappointment; and ſhall be recompenced with *abhorring and Confuſion of Face for evermore*. If that wherein they moſt truſt, deceive them; much more will thoſe things wherein they do not place ſo great Expectation. If the Principal faculties of Soul when they ſtand in oppoſition to God, will not afford true and real contentment; much leſs will the inferiour Paſſions, which disjointed from him do nothing

Iſa. 66. 24.

but

but torment and make miſerable. When neither deſire nor love with their ſeveral Objects are able to make a wicked Man happy, much leſs will the other parts of his Soul which condemn and vex him; His underſtanding doth reprove his Ways, the other Paſſions do torture or Diſcompoſe. If it were not to keep him in life, he had rather have no Soul at all, but would become altogether fleſh and ſence, that he might have all things to reliſh, but nothing to embitter his delights. This wiſh is impoſſible, as it is mean and degenerous; for He who faſhioned every part of us both of Soul and body, hath likewiſe ſo ordained that if they be not brought into Obedience, Sanctified, and made Happy, then as they were the inſtruments of ſin, ſo of puniſhment, and to render Miſerable: Pain and Sickneſs to the body, or if that be not, Grief and Indignation to the Soul. As hereafter there is no middle ſtate between Heaven and Hell, nor any ſtanding ſtill now between both, ſo it is of Happineſs and Miſery. If that which is given to promote the one is not made uſe of accordingly, it will tend to the other: If the Soul is not brought into Obedience unto Happineſs, then it falls down into Deſtruction and Miſery. How we are to be regulated throughout hath been ſhewed Chap. 2. Where the whole Man was taken in pieces that he might be ſet in a right frame; The Underſtanding, Will, and Affections were ſurveyed. In the two firſt, both the good and evil were diſcovered; the affections were treated of as tending to good, if Governed by the Law of God. Now it remains according to the propoſed method to ſpeak of that evil and miſery they occaſion by being ruled according to the Law of the Fleſh. The corruption and abuſe of Love as to its ſeveral Objects hath been handled in the laſt foregoing Chapters; When the good and evil of a thing is laid open, the one may be choſen, and the other avoided. And hereby it may be a little more particularly manifeſted unto Men (would God it were done by a better inſtrument, but here it is endeavoured according to the ability himſelf hath been pleaſed to give.) *Thou art good, and doſt good, teach me thy Statutes. Righteous art thou O Lord, and Upright are thy Judgments. The Teſtimonies that thou haſt commanded, are exceeding Righteous, and very Faithful*, Pſal. 119. 68, 137, 138. Though he hath the greateſt Sovereignty over Creatures, and he might (as ſome earthly Potentates do by their Vaſſals) have exerciſed his authority over them by enjoyning them ſuch and ſuch things, which

which would not be for their good, but only expose them to hardship and inconvenience. But God is not as the Son of Man (who is Ignorant, Proud and Cruel) for there is an intrinsick worth and excellency, a real goodness in the very nature of all things our gracious Lord requires; as on the other hand there is Baseness, Deformity and Evil in forbidden things. *Seek Good and not Evil, that ye may live*; *Hate the Evil, and love the Good*, Amos 5. 14, 15. *Beloved follow not that which is Evil, but that which is Good*, 3 Joh. 11. This is the Law and the Prophets, It is the sum of all the Commandments of God.

We are required to *put off Anger, Wrath, Malice*, Col. 3. 8. *Hatred, Variance, Envyings*, Gal. 5. 20, 21, 26. So certainly there is Evil in them, and they hinder our Happiness. All anger is not sinful nor forbidden, but when without cause and immoderate; Either without Provocation, or upon little and trivial things. Such a temper is contrary to the Peace and Tranquility of Mind: When the Winds blow, and Storms arise, there succeeds a troubled Sea, the Waves roaring: Not much unlike is the Soul of Man, when Contempt, Affront, or other cause hath moved him, that which before was Calm and Smooth, begins to Rise and Swell, and violently beats upon the Banks. The fierceness of the inward Man may be discerned, when the Eyes shall roul up and down like sparks of Fire among the Stubble, *the form of* Dan. 3. 19. *his Visage changed*, Multitude of Words do press at the door of the Mouth, that none are able to get forth but stammering and confused noise; The Hands are with difficulty kept from doing mischief, the Teeth grind and chatter, Reason is banished, and nothing but Rage to be seen; all these outward signs do discover that strange agitation and restlessness the Soul is in. This is properly Wrath, the highest degree of Anger. Man is despicable to look upon abstractedly, but when thus stirred, one would admire so little a Creature should do so great things. His Soul is never so much discerned to be confined and pent up in a narrow Room as then; it would break through the Walls, and causes those about him to fear. Then is raised a ferment and heat of the Blood, which is no more true courage (though it hath a shew thereof) then desperate acts and ravings of distracted Persons; Neither is it Wisdom. *The Fool rageth and is confident. He that is soon angry, dealeth foolishly*, Prov. 14. 16, 17. *The discretion of a Man defereth Anger, and it is his Glory to pass over a Transgression*, Prov. 19. 11. Who

11. Who knows the utmoſt that is in an injury, is leaſt moved with it; and alſo this is a ſign of a truly great and exalted Spirit, for Reeds and not Oaks are ſhaken with the Wind. A little and empty Soul is toſſed to and fro with every breath of provoking Language. He ſerves like the fightings of Wild Beaſts to divert Spectators, only ſuch an one is worſe and more deſtitute of underſtanding, for they bite others, but *he teareth himſelf in his Anger*, Job. 18.4. The whole Man is hurry and diviſion from himſelf, for the time he knows not what he doth; That inward Vexation and Perplexity, that Impatiency and deſire of Revenge, thoſe Malicious Wiſhes of Hurt, if they ſhould not come forth into Act, do certainly hurt himſelf.

But commonly it proves Miſchievous to others, both to Multitudes and ſingle Perſons. Many thouſands in the prime of Age have went down to the Slaughter, have joyned to Butcher one another, as if they were to make a Feaſt of their own Fleſh to the *Deſtroyer*; Surely he laughs and Smiles (if we may ſuppoſe that of the infernal and accurſed Spirit) to ſee poor Mortals do the work themſelves, and of their own accord fall a Prey into his Teeth. Let none ſay this evil is from God, for he hath no pleaſure in the deſtruction of the living, *He maketh Wars to ceaſe unto the end of the Earth*, Pſal. 46.. 9. So *Iſa.* 2. 4. *Mic.* 4. 3. *Pſal.* 68. 30. Which with the Parallel places *ſhall be yet fulfilled.* He hath ſent his Son the Prince of Peace, who hath promulged ſuch a Law to the World, that if obſerved, there would be *no Wars and fightings among us*, but they *come from Mens luſts*, Jam. 4. 2. Ambition and Revenge are the great Incendiaries, which ſprang from him who would be like the Moſt High and thence fell from Heaven. And therefore now continues his hatred againſt God by with-drawing as many as he can from his Obedience; and alſo his own envy at the Happineſs to which Men are appointed, which he hinders as much as he can. It is his employment to nouriſh and inſtil in the hearts of Men all things that may do hurt, amongſt which Rage is one Principal Inſtrument for carrying on his Peſtilent deſign. It works Tranſgreſſion againſt God, and Miſchief to Men, both the Actors and Sufferers: It goes forth by Armies, or two by two. When People have not opportunity to aſſemble themſelves by Troops to ſhed Blood, the Devil takes care they may do it by ſingle parcels. If he, who is placed under God for this purpoſe, keeps the whole Community in Peace and

Quiet-

Quietneſs; yet the Spirit which worketh in the Children of Diſobedience ſtirreth them up ſeverally to kill or maim one another, which it is impoſſible for Humane Government wholly to prevent, for that doth not reach within, and therefore can no more ſtop the beginning of Paſſion, then the firſt breaking forth of fire.

If it be poſſible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men. Dearly beloved, avenge not your ſelves, but rather give place unto Wrath: For it is Written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, ſaith the Lord, Rom. 12. 18, 19. This is piſhed off and ſlighted without duly conſidering the reaſon of the Command. It is matter of the greateſt aſtoniſhment, that ſo little and contemptible a being as the Son of Man is, ſhould behave himſelf ſtoutly and diſdainfully againſt the Lord his God; that he who in himſelf is very fearful and trembles at every thing, ſhould dare to provoke his Maker. The reaſon of ſuch abominable preſumption is, That God having here ordained a life of Tryal and Obedience of Faith, The place of his Eſpecial reſidence is in Heaven which is afar of: And he remains inviſible, undiſcovered to the blinded world. So they either not know, or not think of him, and therefore uſe ſo much boldneſs and contempt towards him. But ſhould he be pleaſed to manifeſt himſelf a little more, had they but the leaſt beholding of his Majeſty and Greatneſs, theſe ſame perſons would creep, who now lift up themſelves againſt the *Holy One of* Iſrael. No Queſtion, there were ſome of as daring Spirits (as any now among us) who ſtood by Mount *Sinai* when God deſcended there, and we know what effect it had upon them; The like is not to be expected again in this World, but yet they ſhall be ſummoned to meet with that God againſt whom they have been diſobedient, and ſhall have a more ſenſible and laſting apprehenſion then the *Iſraelites had*, for their Souls will be terrour round about. Men may be Rebellious, and ſo indeed are in the days of their Fleſh; but when they ſhall drop out of that, Nothing hinders from *certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour the Adverſaries*, Heb. 10. 27.

Go to the proud Men and tell them, they muſt not revenge their Injuries, but leave them to God, for he ſaith, *Is not this laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed up among my Treaſures? To me belongeth Vengeance and Recompence*, Deut. 32. 34, 35. They will be ready to Anſwer, like unto *Pharoah*: Who is the Lord that I ſhould

ſhould obey him? They are for uſing it themſelves. To which it may be replied in the Words following, *Their foot ſhall ſlide in due time, for the day of their Calamity is at hand, and the things that ſhall come upon them make haſte:* And then they ſhall know who is the Lord, and wherefore he Commanded ſo. It is a received Rule among the Men of Faſhion, if any receives an Affront, his own Sword muſt do him Right, and he will venture his Life to accompliſh it: Thinking that if he is killed, there is an end of all his Vexation for the given Injury, and he had rather die then endure it; but if he ſhould overcome, then he gets Honour and is revenged on his Enemy. But is he reſolved to kill or be killed? Let him be told before he goes, that he Acts like a Fool; for if he gains the Field, his diſcontent will not be waſhed away with the Blood of him that cauſed it; his mind will not be more Cheerful when clogged with Gore and Guilt. If himſelf is ſlain, then he falls into the hands of the Living God, and he would intrench upon his Prerogative, who ſaith, *Ah, I will eaſe me of mine Adverſaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies*, Iſa. 1. 24. Do not cajoul your ſelves with a Lye, for Death is not an end, but unto wicked the *beginning of Sorrows*. It is commonly ſaid, Revenge is Sweet, but it hath bitterneſs in the end: If any pleaſure ariſes, it is like one labouring under Pain and Rancour, who hath it ſtopped for a Moment, but it returns with more violence then ever. The mind is upon the Wrack till the furious Perſon hath performed his cruel deſign, and then is for a Minute taken of, but preſently comes a worſe inſtrument of Torture. A Murderer walks only two or three turns by the Carkaſe of the Slain, he Triumphs but a very little time before fear and ſelf accuſing Thoughts ſet a worrying of him. There have been too many ſad Examples of this Nature, who after they have committed this crying ſin, if they eſcape Juſtice, or another takes Satisfaction for the life of the Murderer contrary to *Numb.* 35. 31. Which obliges Kings, Judges, and Potentates as much as others; yet Vengeance ſuffers them not to have comfort of life, but they betake themſelves to Sottiſhneſs to make them unmindful of that for a little time, whereof they are to be ſenſible for all Eternity. They ſeldom come to true Repentance for what is paſt, but go on to ſtifle the ſence thereof till they come to *have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone*, Rev. 21. 8. Againſt which they will find nothing to harden themſelves.

The leaſt tendencies towards this ſin are to be avoided, as may be ſeen by the ſtrict manner of thoſe Precepts, *Mat.* 6. 14, 15. *Mat.* 18. 21, 35. Which indiſpenſably enjoyn the duty of actual forgiveneſs of injuries as is poſſible for Words to expreſs. If you have a mind to be revenged, why ſhould not God take revenge on you for the affronts you have offered unto him? He will certainly deal ſo with you, as you do with others, and then avenge your ſelves if ye dare. He will be more too hard for you, then you can be with one another: You had better be ſtill, for he is ready to execute upon you according as you ſmite your fellow Servants. Have they injured you? You have more offended God, and it is a good way to come off, to forgive them that he may forgive you alſo; *Be patient towards all Men, ſee that none render evil for evil unto any Man*, 1 Theſ. 5. 14, 15. It is for our preſent good to compoſe diſturbed thoughts, to allay the ſwelling of mind; The God whom we ſerve is a ſufficient comfort under all reproaches, we may appeal unto him, Be thou my judge, for I have walked innocently: Though they curſe, yet bleſs thou. *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holineſs, without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord. Looking diligently leſt any Man fail of the Grace of God, leſt any root of Bitterneſs ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled*, Heb. 12. 14, 15.

It is to be admired that the Devil ſhould make uſe of and prevail with a Temptation, as is wholly made up of Torment. He who knows that natural temper in all (and accordingly prepares his others baits) of being willing to be happy and averſe from Miſery, yet through his ſubtlety hath made ſo unpleaſant a thing be received by them. Theſe are ſome of *the depths of Satan*, Rev. 2. 24. But if we ſound this, it is bottomed on Pride, for having ſuggeſted to the hearts of Men; Nothing doth ſo much conduce to their Happineſs as to ſeem great and be highly eſteemed, to be ſet above that none ſhould dare to offend them; to maintain this Principle he makes them ſubmit to much uneaſineſs and trouble, as is done by ſwallowing down thoſe black ſins, Anger, Wrath, Malice, Revenge, in order to gratifie a proud Humour.

Of Envy. But there comes another Spirit more black and ugly which crawls by it ſelf, *viz.* Envy: At firſt ſight we know not whether it ſhould be ranked in the ſame Legion under the Command of Pride, for

for as it proceeds from an abject and base mind, so it doth confess it self. The envious Person acknowledges himself inferiour to whom he envies, for he seeth in another somewhat above which he hath not, and that raises the Gall within him. It gnaws upon the Spirit and Flesh, it willfully brings (what God intended to others for a curse) *leanness into the Soul*, and makes the outward Countenance appear Meagre and Ghastly. Neither Meat and Drink will nourish what this pines and consumes away: for wild Beasts to devour alive is more tolerable, for they make a quick dispatch, but this is as little Vermine continually feeding on the Liver. He breaths forth sighing and grief, within is anguish, a little further is fretting, without is evil speaking and injurious action; It rejoyceth in evil, and is sad at the good which cometh to another; It will misconstrue every thing that is capable to be so. It is sullen, and will not speak out of others well doing, which they cannot gain-say, and should glorifie God for the gifts he giveth unto Men. What is the occasion of all this evil and misery? Not pleasing the flesh, only anothers Happiness; Because such an one is contented and hath good things, he is murmuring under vexatious Thoughts, *As he sees it, he is grieved, he shall gnash with his Teeth and melt away*, Psal. 112. 10.

O cursed abominable Nature to be spiteful against the welfare of others! O thou Child of the Devil, enemy of the happiness of Mankind, who hinders it as far as he can. Who settest thy self principally against * faithful Teachers, the instruments of publick good, resisting honest and worthy actions. *When* Sanballat *the Horonite, and* Tobiah *the Servant of the Ammonite heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly, that there was come a Man to seek the welfare of the Children of* Israel, *Neh.* 2. 10. *Woe unto them for they have gone in the way of* Cain, *Jud.* 11 *Upon you may come all the Righteous Blood shed upon the Earth; from the Blood of Righteous* Abel *unto the Blood of* Zacharias *Son of* Barachias, *whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar*, Mat. 23 35. This he charged upon them who afterwards *for Envy delivered him*, Mat. 27. 18. The Son of God was used as a Servant, that eminent Manifestation of the Love of God to the World was vilified through their Spleen and Hatred; The Holy One, The Prince of Peace endured such contradiction of Sinners as was never heard of before. The Glory of the only begotten of the Father was reiected and despised of Men. What can be said more to aggravate the

* Numb. 11. 29. Psal. 106. 16.

Abomination of Envy? Then that it cauſed the Death of our Lord.

What Storms and Perſecutions hath it ſince raiſed againſt his Members? Hath kindled a fire and ſhed the Blood of thouſands of his Servants becauſe they did receive his Doctrine, and were more Righteous then their Tormenters? *If they have perſecuted me, they will perſecute you alſo*, John 15. 20. Said their forerunner, and it hath been fulfilled to a Witneſs; look upon that vaſt Army of Martyrs, *Who have waſhed their Robes in Blood, and came out from great Tribulation*, unto whom it was ſaid in the days of *John*, *That they ſhould reſt yet for a little Seaſon, until their fellow Servants alſo, and their Brethren that ſhould be killed as they were, ſhould be fulfilled*, Rev. 6. 11. Which ſince his time hath been done in great meaſure, and the end is not yet; Who ſlew all theſe? An Enemy hath done it, through whoſe Envy Death came firſt into the World, and he hath employed his Inſtruments ever ſince for accompliſhing all the miſchief that was ever done. It hath inflicted cruel Mockings and Scourgings, Bonds and Impriſonments, and found out all ways to torture and make miſerable (if that were poſſible) the elect of God. When his only Son, the firſt born among many Brethren was ſlain, he prayed for his Murderers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luke 21. 34. But one would think by this time they have been ſo long uſed to this accurſed Employment, they ſhould know what they do, and who ſets them on, Even the *Dragon who hath ſo long made war with them which keep the Commandments of God, and have the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*, Rev. 12. 17. When People hear their good Confeſſions, with what Faith and Conſtancy they ſuffer for the Name and Truth of the Lord Jeſus, When they neither ſuffer as Traytors, Murderers, Thieves or Evil doers. When they are neither Blaſphemers nor Hereticks *(for an Heretick is condemned of himſelf*, Tit. 3. 11. Convinced to the contrary in his own judgment, and ſuch are they) though their Adverſaries would cloath them in the skin of ſuch, but it is ſo thin that themſelves and all the World may ſee their innocency through it, but Wickedneſs wants a pretence, and ſome they would make uſe of to hide their own Malice and Envy; *Can they hide their Counſel from the Lord?* Or conceal from him *before whom all things are naked and opened*, Heb. 4. 13. *The wicked plotteth againſt the juſt, and gnaſheth upon him with his Teeth* (here is the beginning, but a little further) *The wicked*

1 John 3. 12.

Iſa. 29. 15.

wicked have drawn out the Sword, Pſal. 37. 12, 14. And when they have had Power and Authority, they have executed it. O ye Sons of Men, wherefore ſhould you do ſuch things? Why will ye be Tools to do his Work who hath great Wrath, and but little time? *Satan is not divided againſt Satan*, We do not Read that the Devils torment thoſe of their own kind. Why ſhould you carry your ſelves cruelly and deſpitefully againſt the ſame Fleſh and Blood? They are *the Servants of God*, of whom it is ſaid. *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of his Eye*, Zech. 2. 8. The Lord Chriſt takes it immediately upon himſelf, when any of his Members ſuffer, *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt. It is hard for thee to kick againſt the Pricks*, Acts 9. 5. And therefore you had beſt have a Care what you do to theſe Men. Your Breath is in your Noſtils, which will one day go forth, and then God will ſuffer your evil Deeds no longer. You can only lift up your hand and heart againſt Heaven, and manifeſt a little ſpite againſt your Fellow-Creatures, but will you contend with him who liveth for ever? Who can caſt both Body and Soul in Hell Fire, it will be manifeſted who is ſtronger, and who will have the worſt of it at laſt: Conſider of this before hand. Life is lent to all Men to work out their own Salvation, and eſcape the Wrath to come. And what madneſs is it to bereave others a little before, to ſend them into the place of Reſt, and Doom your ſelves unto Torment? You think evil againſt them, but God will turn it into Good; the more miſchief you do, he will change it into a greater Benefit. There are no ſuch Fools in the World as Perſecutors, for they miſs of the thing they aim at, it falls out contrary to what they would have. *And haſt feared every day, becauſe of the fury of the Oppreſſour, as if he were ready to deſtroy, and where is the fury of the Oppreſſour?* Iſa. 51. 13. What is now become of all thoſe ſtirs they have made in the World? The Duſt is caſt over them, and they are quiet; their hands are tyed up and fettered in the Grave from doing any more violence, the wickedneſs of thoſe wicked Men is come to an end, but where do their Souls abide? In what Condition are they? How vext and enraged are they at their paſt Rage? With what Fear and Trembling do they look for the Reſurrection of their Bodies, when they muſt come forth to Judgment. And thoſe who did heretofore ruffle and bluſter in humane Courts and Judicatories, will be forced to behave themſelves in another manner, at the Judgment Seat of Chriſt. Thoſe mighty Emperours

rours and Tyrants will find one higher then they; the inferiour Officers and Magiſtrates will meet with one, whom they were as much bound to obey as their reſpective Maſters. *The great ſwelling Words* will be changed into doleful Crys and Lamentations. Inſtead of Domineering and inſulting over thoſe they had once Priſoners before them will ſucceed trembling at their Preſence, and will be ſtrangely abaſhed to ſee them become their Judges. *God will ariſe and maintain his own Cauſe*, and the boldeſt Perſecutors ſhall at length find, *It is hard to kick againſt the Pricks*, the fiercer they do it, the deeper they wound themſelves. *Their Sword ſhall enter into their own Heart, and their Bows ſhall be broken*, Pſal. 37. 15.

If you are Men and not ſavage Wolves, Be reaſoned with a little. Wherefore ſhould you deal ſo cruelly againſt thoſe who believe on God and obey him? They muſt acknowledge He is greater then Man, and ſhould be ſerved by us. Is their hatred againſt the mighty One, becauſe *They would not have him Reign over them*? Luke 14 14. And becauſe they cannot hurt him, will they hurt his Servants? He ſets himſelf on their ſide. It is impoſſible to reſiſt him. It is madneſs, but to attempt it. If it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, leſt haply ye be found even to fight againſt God, *Acts* 5. 39. He ſearcheth the very Secrets of all Hearts, and if *their Rage is againſt him*, Iſa. 37. 28. he knoweth it. There is a Root of bitterneſs growing within the Boſom of Perſecutors, an *Enmity againſt God*. Either it muſt be this, or hatred againſt the Perſons of good Men in whom ſhines forth his Image, or both; as is moſt common. The firſt is Ignorance and ſtrange iniquity; the ſecond upon Inquiry will be found unreaſonable and without cauſe. Do you hate them for following that which is good? You will not acknowledge ſo, for an evil Work you pretend: Why, look throughly, and you will ſee no ſuch thing. Examine impartially both ſides, and it will appear good; but then ariſes Envy and Hatred, that ſuch ſhould be better then your ſelves. Then in your Opinion they do good. Why will you not alſo do the ſame? In a temporal Matter none Envies another, for a thing which himſelf may have, or the other would willingly help him unto. This turns into Thanks and Goodwill. And why ſhould it not be the ſame in reference to the things of God? Is another righteous, and doſt thou ſecretly imagine him Happy therein? Thou mayſt be ſo likewiſe, if thou wouldeſt

do

do the ſame things. *God is no reſpecter of Perſons*, and he will give his Grace to thee, if thou wilt ſeek after it as he hath done. *In my Fathers houſe are many Manſions*, ſaid the Son of God, who came down from Heaven. Anothers ſtriving will not prejudice thee; if only ſome few might come there, we might well be angry at thoſe who would get before us: But ſeeing *God would have all to be ſaved, and Chriſt taſted Death for every Man*, there is no fear but thou mayſt be Partaker alſo, if another doth endeavour after the ſame Grace and Glory. He will do his endeavour that thou mayſt come alſo, but this thou doſt not like, Why ſhould he be a Buſie-body in another Mans Matter? But conſider a little, if a Man had incurred the Diſpleaſure of the King, and ſo was liable to Impriſonment and Death; a Friend would put him in the way to preſerve and reſtore him into Favour, is not this eſteemed a kindneſs? A wicked Life and Converſation renders liable to the Wrath of God and Damnation of Hell, and therefore he is not to blamed, who would perſwade to repent and eſcape it. When one is *ready to periſh*, What fault is it for another to put him in mind to return to his Fathers houſe, who will receive with all Loving kindneſs, that henceforward he may live in obedience and favour of ſo good a God, die with Comfort, and enjoy him in Glory. What harm is in all this? *Shall evil be recompenced for Good? For they have digged a Pit for my Soul; remember that I ſtood before thee, to ſpeak good for them, and to turn away thy Wrath from them*, Jer. 18. 20.

Ay, but ſuch an one believes we ſhall be damned and miſerable, he thinks ſo of us, as if he would have it; ſurely he is to be juſtly hated for this.

This ſeems to be the very Reaſon why the wicked have been ſo deſpiteful againſt the Godly in all Ages. Though they will not ſpeak plain, they will hint as much, and therefore it is expedient that ſuch things ſhould be laid open, that all miſtakes might be rectified, for want of which is occaſioned all the Hatred and Heart-burning of the Sons of Men one againſt another: Amongſt which this peſtilent ſurmiſe hath done ſo much miſchief. What was it that ſet the *Jews* firſt, the *Gentiles* afterwards, and all wicked Men ever ſince in ſuch a Rage againſt Chriſt and his Followers? He told the *Jews*, *I am the way, the Truth and the Life, No Man can come unto the Father, but by me. This is Life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*,

ſon, John 17. 3. He ſharply reproves their Sins, *Fill ye up then the meaſure of your Fathers. Ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers, how can ye eſcape the Damnation of Hell?* Mat. 23. 32, 33. So the *Jews* unleſs they repented and believed, were ſhut out from the Mercy of God. In like manner were concluded the heathen World from *Acts* 4. 12. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 8. *Rev.* 21. 8. And that ſaying of our Lord, *John* 5. 28, 29. reacheth unto all wicked Men, of all Generations and Places. To be deprived of ſo great a good, and threatned with alike Evil, hath ſet Men a madding, and hath made them ſpit out their Venom againſt the Aſſerters of theſe Truths, as if our ſelves were the Authors of them, and ſo would have it be. But yet they need not be preſently enraged, for the Promiſes and Threatnings of God are not abſolute and irreverſible, but the one obtained, and the other avoided by Repentance in the mean while. So *there is a door of hope* open to the worſt of Men to come in, unleſs they are ſo mad to ſhut it againſt themſelves. Though they do wickedly now, they may ceaſe to do ſo as ſoon as they will, and come in whilſt the day of Salvation laſteth. When *the Long-ſuffering of God waits* 1 Pet. 3 20. that Men ſhould be more forward to haſten Deſtruction upon themſelves, is a ſtrange and unnatural Conſequence, as if they ſworn to be miſerable, and like deſperate condemned Rebels which might have their Pardon, yet they will be ſtubborn, not to ſue for it, but do all the miſchief they can before they die. If they are ſo perverſly reſolved, they will ſee who will repent of it firſt, God or themſelves. He that made Men hath power over them; and ſeeing he hath revealed ſuch Decrees concerning their final Condition, what are we, that we ſhould not believe him? We muſt, or *we make God a Lyar* 1 John 5. 10. which we will not do for the deſpitefulneſs of all the World. Be it known unto you, that the God whom we ſerve, is true and will perform what he hath ſaid. He hath threatned a great Puniſhment to unbelief, *Heb.* 3. 18, 19. *Rev.* 21. 8. and therefore we dare not in the leaſt give way to it. But is to be underſtood, that our ſpeaking of them do no more make them then a Proclamation of the King is by talking thereof among fellow Subjects. The *Gulph is already fixt*, our Thoughts and Words did not make it; ſo ſuch would nevertheleſs drop in, if we ſhould think or ſay they would not: In point of Prudence it is better for Men to turn from their Sins and Vanities, then to run the dreadful event thereof. Indeed we do

do believe the Scripture is the Word of God, and all things contained therein are true, and therein is plainly declared a place of Punishment; but that we would have it so, is nothing to us: We are but Servants, and to be contented with whatsoever pleases our great Master, for we dare not prescribe unto him, or tell him what we would have: If we did, our selves being in the Flesh we should rather take part with that, for our selves are in danger, and we should rather desire there was none, but we submit to the Good will of our God. What *Jeremiah* saith of himself, is the mind of all sincere and real Christians. *Neither have I desired the woful day thou knowest, that which came out of my lips was right before thee*, Jer. 17. 16. They are bound to believe and speak forth Gods Truth, but yet far from wishing the Misery of those who are *Flesh of their Flesh, and Bone of their Bone*, of the same common stock and likeness with themselves. However they must love God more then Man; and be more zealous for his Glory, Truth and Justice, then the welfare of others. They had rather that wicked Men turn and live. They would have such part with *deceitful Lusts for true Happiness*, and do use their utmost endeavours to accomplish this blessed Work; but if they continue still in an *hard impenitent heart*; If they persist to hate, provoke, and despise the most Lovely, Excellent, Glorious One, who hath not in the least deserved it from them: If they abuse his Goodness and Long-suffering, which at length is worn out, and their day is past. *Let God arise, and let his Enemies be scattered, let them also that hate him flee before him: As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: As Wax melteth before the Fire, so let the wicked perish at the Presence of God. But let the righteous be glad, let them rejoyce before God, yea, let them exceedingly rejoyce*, Psal. 68. 1, 2, 3. They will be pleased when they behold God glorified in his Justice upon the wicked, as in his Mercy on themselves: Even they will fully acknowledge, the Lord is righteous, he hath dealt with them accordingly to their deservings, they had their Choice, and he did all things to bring them to Heaven, and avoid the evil; but they maliciously refused the one, and did run blindly into the other. If now they would lay aside prejudice and false judgings, and debate the Matter seriously in their minds, they must Confess the Goodness and Justice of God in the Government of the World, as to future Rewards and Punishments, though we are now in the Flesh, and have not so very clear a discovery of things; much

more will it appear when we ſhall be ſtript and diſpoſſeſſed of all, when the *Judge himſelf ſhall teſtifie againſt us*, Pſal. 50. 6, 7. And plead with the Inhabitants of the Earth, give a large Account of what he hath done for his Vineyard, and leave us to *judge what he could do more, that he hath not done*, Iſa. 5. *that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the World become Guilty before God*, Rom. 3. 19. The Righteous will ſay, *If thou Lord hadſt been extream to mark iniquity, who might abide it*? Even they would be Condemned: But they fled to him, who was ſet forth for *an Advocate and Propitiation for our Sins*; they entred into that Covenant of Grace which was made through him between God and Man, and ſincerely performed the Conditions thereof (O what magnifying will there then be of the Mercy of the Father in ſending him, and his Love in doing ſo great things for mankind) But for thoſe his Enemies who *would not have him Reign over them*, who did *Call him Lord, Lord, but did not the things he ſaid*, who did mock and trifle with him, theſe ſhall find to be true what is written, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7, 8, 9 *Rev.* 2. 23. The Secrets of all Hearts will be manifeſted, all Tricks and Evaſions will vaniſh, and themſelves will really aſſent to the Truth and uprightneſs of Gods proceeding againſt them. They will be forced to know theſe things, when knowledge will do them no good, but to aggravate their own Folly, that they would not know them before-hand, that they were *willingly ignorant* 2 Pet. 3. 5. Who are now of a different Opinion from the Godly, and ſo exaſperated againſt them, will find thoſe things to be true they told them of, and will wiſh they had hearkened to them.

In the Word of God is ſuch abundant Conviction for all ſorts of wicked Men, but eſpecially the worſt ſort of Perſecutors, that when they hear theſe things, the former muſt be *pricked in their Heart*, Acts 2. 37. and ſo bring them to Repentance; the others *cut to the Heart*, Acts 7. 54. which would ſtop the way of them. But if they are deſperately reſolved and *gnaſh with their Teeth*, then they muſt *Cry with a loud voice and ſtop their Ears*, Verſe 57. and run upon miſchief: Making the outward noiſe to ſilence the Cries within them. Be ſure not to hear what can be ſaid againſt their wicked Deſigns, for then they could not do them. They muſt violently ruſh on, for they cannot go ſoft, deliberate and do this. They haſten on with hurry and Paſſion, for let them take ſober Councel they will never Act ſuch things. If they take advice

vice from Scripture, they will be found mad, and Enemies to themſelves. If by Reaſon, that will pronounce them to be Fools and cruel to others. And therefore if their Hearts are fully ſet in them to do evil, they muſt conſult with neither: And this is the very Reaſon why they go on in their Courſe, as is generally of a wicked Life, to reſolve firſt to hear nothing to the contrary. But if one was throughly bent to commit Theft, Robbery, Treaſon, and thereupon think himſelf ſafe, becauſe he would not know the Kings Laws, ſhould we think him ſo? He would be hanged for all that. In like manner God hath publiſhed his Word to the World, and whether Men will take notice of the Truths of it or no, they only lie dormant for a while, but he will judge and condemn by it; and their ignorance will not excuſe, but aggravate their Guilt, becauſe it was malicious and wilful. They might have known in this their Day the things which belong to their Peace, but when they are hid from their Eyes, they will be plagued that they did not know them, and what they now account a Priviledge will be one degree more of their Torment.

Let others have a Care how they become the Authors of Reproach and Perſecution, which begins by the ſteps of Malice and Ill-will. Our Lord himſelf laid open the unreaſonableneſs thereof, for having before ſhewed why they ſhould not, he ſaith, *Yet they both hated me and my Father, but this comes to paſs that the word might be fulfilled, which was written in their Law, they hated me without a Cauſe*, John 15.25. He told his Diſciples that they alſo would be hated, and ſo it hath appeared of his true Followers in all Ages ever ſince.

But why ſhouldſt thou Labour ſo much in this Point? Seeing thoſe who are *Hated*, *Slandered*, and *Perſecuted*, are Partakers of the Bleſſing, and obtain a Reward for it; and conſequently it is better for them to be ſo intreated.

This is a right *Julian* Scoff; yet we have our Saviour for an Example in vindicating himſelf, and the holy Apoſtles maintaining their Innocency, and ſhewing the unreaſonableneſs of their Adverſaries rage againſt them. However God is pleaſed to turn the Sufferings of his Servants into good, recompence them with Comfort here, and Glory hereafter, yet they are to be put in mind, not preſently to ſuffer without uſing all lawful means for their own Preſervation. God is to be glorified in their good Con-

ſeſſions, they are to acquaint the wicked World of their iniquity, and unreaſonableneſs in doing ſo againſt them, and to take off from all manner of falſe Accuſation, that the generality of Men may be throughly convinced, that theſe do not *ſuffer as evil doers*. And if after all this they ſuffer, it is *according to the Will of God* (for holding faſt to his Ways and Truth, and ſo as he would have them behave themſelves) *They may commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator*. Neither are thoſe who inflict it to be excuſed, for their intentions are Malice and Evil, they did as much miſchief as they could, they did kill the Body, and would have killed the Soul if that were in their Power. Thoſe who bereaved of Life, would hinder them of the Crown of Glory if they could, and ſo that is given, the utmoſt thanks are due only to our moſt Wiſe and bountiful Lord, and not in the leaſt to horrid Miſcreants. Such Conſiderations may be of uſe to prevent their own wickedneſs, to hinder that Miſery which will come upon all thoſe, who hereafter ſhall preſume to do thus ungodly; that they may fear and refrain.

What is prejudicial to the Happineſs of mankind, is to be taken notice of, that it may be avoided; this hath been ſhewed to ſpring from that mingled Seed of Malice and Envy, and ſo it aptly fall in our way. The Heart is the principle of Action; for the hands execute that which the Man thinks fit to be done, and therefore it is neceſſary to prevent evil and irregular Actings to look unto the firſt Riſe and rectifie that. If thoſe deſtructive and poyſonous Seeds had never been ſown, or picked out, or the growth of them hindred, then all this miſchief had not been. If we could take away all Malice, evil Surmiſings, and Envy, there would be no Perſecution in the World; for though it may alſo ariſe from blind and ſinful Zeal, yet where this is, thoſe things are alſo intermingled againſt their Perſons. If there was Love and common Humanity, they would *ſearch and have the Cauſe known*; but when they either hate or grudge to gratifie theſe wicked Humours, they may think they do God Service. When they have private Peak of their own, they will play the Hypocrites, pretend to be like God, and be *clad with zeal as a Cloak* to hide that, not conſidering the All-ſeeing Eye: Ambition and Covetouſneſs may have ſome hand, but Hatred, Malice, and Envy do ſtill creep in among them.

See Iſa. 26. 11.

It

It is the very conſtitution of the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit which worketh in the Children of Diſobedience. 'Tis that which ſets him walking about ſeeking whom he may devour, which he privily conveys into the hearts of Men, and works mightily to *reſiſt the ſervants of God*, and for advancing his Kingdom of Darkneſs. Pride and Envy are the great ſetters of it up; the firſt is the Capital ſin, the other doth truckle under it. Though it ſeems ſneaking and low, yet it is founded on the Proud aſpiring Humour of Man: Every one hath too good an Opinion of himſelf, and thinks he deſerves as well, yea, better then others; and therefore if they are above him in other advantages, he is diſcontented with himſelf and ſecretly envies them. Why ſhould they be in a better condition then himſelf? What reaſon is it they ſhould be more Happy? Are their Merits ſo tranſcending his own, or his Provocations more then theirs? And thence he begins to murmur at the good Man of the Houſe, That God whoſe Wiſe Providence governs the World. But hear what he ſaith, *Is it not Lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine Eye evil becauſe I am Good?* Mat. 20. 15. Why ſhould he be quarrelling and repining at the Gifts of God, who is Sovereign, and obliged to none, but diſperſes to his Creatures according to his own good Pleaſure? We cannot comprehend the reaſon of his doings, but he hath ſaid *to whom he hath given much, of them he will require more*; at laſt it will appear that *God is no reſpecter of Perſons*, and he gave to all ſufficient means to work out their own Salvation. We may judge that there muſt be inequality to make Order and Government, there muſt be ſtrings of a different ſize towards Harmony and Muſick. If one Star is greater then another, yet the leſs is as full of light according to its Proportion. *Zacheus* who was little of Statute, was as much a Man as the *Giants of Old*: We think it hard when we look with the Carnal Eye on the meer outſide, but how know we that God therefore purpoſely ordered it to be differently with Men for a greater Exhortation to lay hold of the Hope ſet before us? We cannot endure another ſhould be more happy then our ſelves, Why then ſhould not we endeavour to be Happy likewiſe? And in the mean while take away theſe unpleaſant thoughts, riſe up and be doing: *Ceaſe from Anger, and forſake Wrath, fret not thy ſelf in any wiſe to do Evil*, Pſal. 37. 8. There is but one true Happineſs ſet before all the Sons of Men, of which every

every one may be partaker: That is Heaven and the way to it. If others either not come in, or ſtraggle out to gather a few fading delights, do you keep cloſe in, and you will be more Happy even now, and alſo at the end then they.

It is thought by ſome that all have an equal ſhare and degree of Wordly Happineſs; thoſe who have greateſt enjoyments, have allaies anſwerable to them, and who have a leſs quantity of outward Bleſſings, have leſs of tormenting deſires and more contentment; there are Divertiſements to all ſorts of People, the meaneſt rub out their time, all on as thoſe of more exalted condition. Upon a ſtrict and through enquiry, allowing for the neceſſaries and ſome few recreations of life, whatever is more, is ſo little that it doth not deſerve any ſtrife or contention. Every Night ſhuts up not only the delights of the Day, but of a Mans whole life paſt, and in reſpect of that there is no difference of Happineſs or Miſery: And there is ſo little in them, that it is the ſame thing whether Pleaſures be had or not, they are not worthy to be ſought after for the future. If we reflect upon things according to common Obſervation and Experience, there is no room left for Envy, for that is remedied by having a true eſtimate of the Nature of things. But if we ſhould *go into the Sanctuary and conſider the end of thoſe Men*, who turn their Employments into *the pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon*; Who diſobey God and draw his diſpleaſure upon them, loſing the recompence of reward for that which ſatisfies not, and come to the place of Torment for thoſe Delights which did periſh whilſt they were had; Can any one envy the Glory of ſuch? Good Men have been offended at the proſperity of the Wicked, we hear frequently thereof in the Old Teſtament, but not ſo much in the New. Thoſe who had chiefly Temporal Promiſes to Encourage them to Obedience, might well ſtartle when the Diſobedient alſo received the ſame in effect. *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain*, Pſal. 73.13. There was not then a clear revelation of a judgment to come, and the ſucceeding Eternity, which is to make a vaſt difference between the Righteous and the Wicked: This would have inſtantly ſatisfied all their doubts. But now Chriſtians who are aſſured of all this, have no reaſon to let their thoughts be diſturbed this way; Yet, *Do ye think the Scripture ſaith in vain, the Spirit that dwelleth in us luſteth to Envy*, Jam. 4. 5. The difference between ſins of Regenerate and Unregenerate is, The firſt have little motions

and

and tendencies towards them which are cruſhed and kept ſhort; but the others ſuffer them to break forth into open act. And ſo there are in ſincere good People ſome little inclinations to Envy. They are apt to be grieved that thoſe who provoke God, ſhould flouriſh and ſeem outwardly in better plight then themſelves. There is a carnal intermixture, ſomething for themſelves when they cry out, How long wilt thou ſuffer them to do in this wiſe? Such thoughts are evil, perhaps God gives them their portion in this life; However, we are to let him alone with the ways of his providence, for he (and not we poor Wretches) knoweth what he hath to do. How he deals with others, What is that to us? We may reſt fully ſatisfied with what the Wiſe Man ſaith, *Tho' a ſinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet ſurely I know that it ſhall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him*, Eccleſ. 8. 12. God cannot be unrighteous, and if he deals more bountifully with the wicked in this life then with you, Certainly you will fare better then they in that which is to come. Faith and Knowledge will cure all manner of Envy.

The Grace of God doth not deſtroy our Affections, but only turn them from evil upon that which is good. Anger and Wrath may be changed into *Zeal* for the Glory of God, and Indignation at every thing that diſpleaſeth him. There is a Godly kind of *Revenge*, 2 Cor. 7. 11. to be acted upon our ſelves: All Hatred and Malice may be confined to a conſtant Deteſtation and Abhorrence of ſin in our ſelves or others; with this caution, that nothing of private Spleen doth come in, hating the Wickedneſs in them, but not the Men. *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee, and am not I grieved with thoſe that riſe up againſt thee? I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine Enemies*, Pſal. 139. 21. 22. Saith the Pſalmiſt. It muſt be only for this Reaſon, becauſe they *hate the Lord*: And whoſoever loves him, muſt neceſſarily be vexed with ſuch who without cauſe do hate him that is moſt Good and Gracious; It is the utmoſt perverſeneſs that makes any to be malicious and ſtubborn Offenders. It is obſervable what our Lord commands, *Love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you*, Mat. 5. 44. But are we to do all this to thoſe who carry themſelves after this manner againſt God himſelf? Let us do any thing to reform them, pray for them, endeavour by kindneſs and all ways to perſwade them off from their evil ways.

2 Chron. 19. 2.
Rev. 2. 2.

ways. But if they continue froward and deſpiſers, let no fawning be uſed towards them; Let nothing be done to nouriſh them up in their Rebellion. We are in no wiſe to bleſs them that blaſpheme the Holy One of *Iſrael*, and curſe by his Name, or to do good to them that hate him, no otherwiſe then to draw off, not encourage them in their Tranſgreſſion.

And laſty, Envy is to give place to an honeſt emulation (for thoſe only which have affinity to *Hatred, Variance, Wrath*, and *Strife* amongſt which it is ranked, *Gal.* 5. 21. are ſinful and excluding. Every one would fain be as Happy as another; Improve that principle to the utmoſt, but go orderly in that way God hath ſhewed (for there is no other) and thereby who can walk faſteſt. A bleſſed contention when Chriſtians ſtrive who can moſt grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; Who can moſt abound in Good Works, and live in all manner of Obedience. *Let us conſider one another to provoke unto love and Good Works*, Heb. 10. 24. A noble competition and well pleaſing unto God, when his Children ſtrive together who ſhall lay up the beſt Foundation againſt the time to come, who ſhall get moſt of his Love and Favour, who ſhall give moſt Diligence to make his Calling and Election ſure. In this good Emulation none envies another, every one trys what he can do for his part, if another doth better, he is glad and glorifies God on his behalf. He is quickened thereby to do more for himſelf, but in the Name of God let every one ſeek to ſerve him to the utmoſt; It is a *common Salvation*, and the more earneſtly others contend for it, there is room left ſtill for thee. If others glorifie God by their light ſhining before men, you may make it up another way in Humility and Thankfulneſs. It may be you have not ſuch opportunity as he hath, if thou haſt and doſt not come upon him, it is thy own Omiſſion, thou mayſt do more; To apply here *Phil.* 1. 17, 18, 19. *If others ſerve God more then thy ſelf, thou doſt rejoyce, ſeeing that God is ſerved, yea, and thou wilt rejoyce, for thou knowſt that this ſhall turn to thy Salvation through the Prayer of your Brethren and the ſupply of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Even thoſe Paſſions which through Diſobedience do cauſe miſery to the Sons of Men, may be Converted into Veſſels of the Sanctuary, help them now their daily Miniſtration, and tend to their Reward hereafter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

OF

FEAR.

FOraſmuch as Fear is implanted in all Men, and hath relation to ſomewhat, the ſubject of this enſuing Diſcourſe will be, Whether it is better to ſtifle, diſregard, or to provide againſt that Fear? Not to Fear at all is impoſſible, ſo not deſirable by a prudent Man, for it ſerves to divers good Ends and purpoſes; but *not to be afraid with any Amazement*, 1 Pet. 3. 6. Not to be ſo horribly afflicted with it as generally People are, is a thing which may be attained; And if Religion ſheweth us the only good and wiſe way, which is more ſafe then any other, herein it tends very much to the Happineſs of Mankind. We are all poor imperfect Creatures, Men and not Gods; yet of ſuch a ſtrange aſpiring Temper, that we are apt to forget what we are: So it is neceſſary as to us all for the *Lord to put us in fear that we may know our ſelves to be but Men*, Pſal. 9. 20. When we are lifted up, this depreſſeth us low again; we are ſwoln with Pride, but contracted with Fear. That is Big and Stately, this ſhrinks into its due Poſture; That ſtruts and thinks it ſhall never be moved, this reminds of the Truth that he is ſubject to injury and falling. What a Monſtrous thing would Man be, if there was nothing to allay the proud Humour? Whither would he be carried, when every little thing doth puff him up as it doth a Bubble, if there was not to pull down? A ſmall conceit of Happineſs tranſports him beyond himſelf, ſo it is requiſite a ſence of that Miſery within him, and he is further liable unto, ſhould humble and reduce him into right Frame. That he ſhould not be always cheated and exalted with a Lye, but be truly informed

formed of his own State and Condition. Let him not imagine he is come only to Swagger here, or think himſelf the chiefeſt in the Creation; *Our Lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* Pſal. 12. 4. For aſſuredly there is One greater then he: Who made him, and gave himſelf power thus to Domineer, muſt be more great: And it is he who is infinitely above us, and him we ought to Fear. As he made, ſo he can daſh in pieces. He hath faſhioned us ſubject to Frailty and Conſumption within, to Hurt and Caſualty without. He doth good, ſo likewiſe he can Puniſh: *He is the great Law-giver who is able to ſave and deſtroy.* Indeed the ſence thereof is the cauſe of all the Fear in the World, tho Men would fain ſtifle the Apprehenſion of God, which he hath ordered to be conveyed unto them by their own Fears; yet they will not acknowledge him, whom they do Fear. What malicious ſtubbornneſs is this? What abſurd folly? Beſides natural awe and reverence, they do dread him by reaſon of Tranſgreſſion, and they will ſin yet more by not owning him. They will not ſpeak out what they can hardly conceal; They would ſhut him out of their mind who is in every part, and viſible in all the World beſides. All the faculties of the Soul do diſcover him, the inclination of the underſtanding to know him, the deſire and will to enjoy him, and every affection doth ſomewhat manifeſt him.

Rom. 1.

The Lord Reigneth, let the People tremble, Pſal. 99. 1. Some fooliſhly diſdaining to be kept under (who ignorantly would have been freed from what is their greateſt honour and good) have hence attempted at the very foundation; but by ſo doing they only hurt themſelves, and provoke him yet more. God is above, and hath power over Men; they can neither make him nor themſelves ceaſe to be, or preſerve themſelves from his Dominion. Neither let the Worldly Wiſe Men think themſelves ſecure, becauſe they will drive the Sence and Fear of God out from within them. But he remembers their deſpiſing and negligence of him: They do only for a little time put off their Fears and Doubts, which will return ſadly upon themſelves when paſt remedy. *I alſo will chooſe their deluſions, and will bring their Fears upon them, becauſe when I called none did Anſwer, when I Spake they did not Hear,* Iſa. 66. 4. In this ſhort and vain life, Men may caſt out of their hearts the Fear of God, and harden themſelves againſt him; but from the day of their Death, they will be forced to Fear him, when Fear will do no good. Their Soul will leap out nothing but fright and conſternation,

ſternation, and their Tormenting Paſſions will be ſtretched out to the utmoſt. In temporal evils the fear is often greater, but it is contrary as to Eternal. *Who knoweth the Power of thine Anger? Even according to thy Fear, ſo is thy Wrath*, Pſal. 90. 11.

And however ſome will not Fear the greater, yet they do the leſs. If they do not chooſe the Fear of the Lord, they are afraid of every thing beſides which hath the leaſt Power to do hurt; let them pretend what they will, they do ſecretly, but unwillingly dread him: And this is the reaſon of that univerſal practice amongſt the Men of this World, to hear or think as little of him as may be, for they are uneaſie and diſturbed every time they hear him named, unleſs by way of cuſtomary Oath and Provocation. Which is one reaſon that makes the ſin of raſh Swearing and taking Gods Name in Vain ſo much in uſe upon trivolous Matters and Idle Expreſſions, for hereby it is made ſo familiar and common as takes off from that inward trembling they have at the leaſt ſerious thoughts of him. This is directly contrary to the third Commandment, which ſeems to have been therefore given, that *this Glorious and Fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD*, Deut. 28. 58. ſhould not be made vile and cheap, for that would deſtroy the reverence we owe unto him; But this is a ſilly device of the wicked, for thus they ſin yet more, and by only ſtifling the ſence they do not take away, but increaſe the cauſe of their Fear; So it is likewiſe of their talking of Religion in their Drunken Fits, which is laughed at for a merry Faſhion, but is Abominable and Provoking, and is becauſe they cannot bear the ſober thoughts thereof. If one was to unravel the whole *Myſtery of Iniquity*, how much folly and contradiction would he find therein? But for all Mens doing they will never be too ſtrong for *the Almighty*, nor 1 Cor. 10. 22. too cunning for the *All-wiſe God*. How much better had they ſubmit and confeſs unto God, *Thou, even thou art to be feared*, Pſal. 76. 7. *Sanctifie the Lord of Hoſts himſelf, and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread, and he ſhall be for a Sanctuary*, Iſa. 8. 13, 14. They muſt neceſſarily, and alſo do Fear ſomewhat, and on whom ſhould it be placed, but who is moſt worthy thereof? *With God is terrible Majeſty, touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, he is excellent in Power and in Judgment, and in Plenty of Juſtice, he will not afflict; Men do therefore fear him*, Job 37. 22, 23, 24. Take God in both his Natures, When he is Angry or Merciful, he is to be Feared: *Our God is a conſuming Fire*, Heb. 12. 29. And

it is no diſparagement for the ſtouteſt heart to run from that, yea, he doth. And if ſome out of damned Pride may pretend to ſlight this, thinking it cowardly to fear inviſible powers; yet the time of Trial will come upon themſelves. *And he that is courageous among the Mighty, ſhall flee away naked in that day, ſaith the Lord,* Amos 2. 16. Zeph. 1. 14. His Power and Indignation will command Fear from the greateſt of his Enemies; ſo his Majeſty and Goodneſs do require *Reverence and Godly Fear* from all his Servants. *Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? For to thee doth it appertain: Foraſmuch as among all the Wiſe Men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms there is none like unto thee,* Jer. 10. 7.

Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? He hath ſaid in his heart, Thou wilt not require it, Pſal. 10. 13. Another reaſon is before aſſigned, verſ. 4, 5. *God is not in all his thoughts, thy judgments are far above out of his ſight.* They pretend to deſpiſe whom either they not think of, or not know, or not believe; for if they did, it is impoſſible to diſregard him. A blind Man may run to the ſide of a ſteep Rock, or brink of a River, and yet not be concerned at it, for he ſeeth not where he is: And when *the fool ſaith in his heart there is no God,* nor will admit the leaſt ſerious thoughts of him, then he may ſay within himſelf, *Tuſh, God I care not for thee.* He may bid defiance when he perceives no danger; Things at a diſtance are not feared, and ſome are apt to conclude, God is in Heaven, that he doth not mind what is ſaid or done here, that he is ſlow to take Vengeance, and will be pacified again. Such are the real Cauſes why Men are ſo bold to Tranſgreſs againſt him; *Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not Executed ſpeedily, therefore the hearts of the Sons of Men are fully ſet in them to do evil,* Eccleſ. 8. 11. They have naturally an awful apprehenſion of God, and at firſt are fearful to offend him; but when they ſee others provoke him and no harm happen unto them, yea, ſometimes Proſper, they take Heart by little and little to ſin againſt him, eſpecially if they find no hurt upon themſelves. The ſenſual blinded World judge very much by Events; and becauſe they ſee no ſuch dreadful Judgments poured down upon Sinners, that all things happen alike to all, and continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation, Men may do as they will: it is the Preachers trade to cry out againſt Sin, but they are vain Words, for they come to nothing: Whereas they ſpeak of future Rewards and Puniſhments, and

Ezek. 12. 22, 23, 24.

and the time of Deciſion is not yet come. In this may be ſeen a Wiſe ordering of Divine Providence, that a Life of tryal might be had, that we might walk by Faith, and not by Sight. Men might diſcern, and comply with the Patience and Long-ſuffering of God, and not deſpiſe it as now they do. However, they carry themſelves towards God, it is neither Courage nor Boldneſs; but proceeds from the Principles of a corrupt, baſe and timorous Nature, as will be more manifeſted anon: Or they do, they know not what. Theſe People, Who upon through ſcrutiny will be moſt convinced thereof, do object Fearfulneſs to Religion, and that this doth not take away, but cauſe it the more.

This is acknowledged, our excellent Religion doth not abſolutely take it away, but the Preſſures and Vexation thereof. It is neceſſary to prevent the Evils to come, and therefore to be retained; but a truly Religious Fear is not ſlaviſh, *nor hath torment.* By Fear of God we acknowledge our Subjection unto him; and this being mixed with Love makes *Reverence*, which the Soul is pleaſed ſhould have a conſtant abode over her. This makes the Man to *walk humbly with his God*, and not dejectedly. Every one doth ſtartle or ſhrink a little; *but to have a trembling Heart, and to Fear day and night*, Deut. 28.65,66. to be for the moſt part tormented with it, is the Curſe of the wicked, and not the righteous Mans Portion. He fears nothing, but what is natural or reaſonable to Fear. Indeed Gods own People have committed ſingle Acts of Sin, beſides infirmity, which he is pleaſed to *chaſtiſe in them, that they ſhould not be condemned with the World*, 1 Cor. 11.32. So they may be ſometimes in great Fear, as there are Examples in *Job*, *David* and other Saints. We are not to judge by what happens at ſome particular time, but the general Courſe of Life: And even this doth ſhew that Fear is the conſtant follower of Sin and Guilt; take away this, and the other will ceaſe. All Fear is becauſe of ſome evil which may happen: Now if it were not for what Scripture makes known, no other evil would come upon Sinners, but preſent and temporal inconveniencies, which they now ſee, But they do not Fear theſe at all: They know and can bear with Worldly evils; but further there is a Senſe that they have not done what they ſhould, that they have offended one Higher whom they were bound to obey, he is ready to inflict a Puniſhment, which they are conſcious that themſelves do deſerve, this makes them afraid. This is matter of Fact as

every

every ones Conſcience can bear Witneſs to it; for thoſe ſecret and unknown Sins to the World, there is a dread of unſeen things. The Care to ſtifle and put away the Senſe of this, doth diſcover it to others, though they endeavour to keep it never ſo cloſe. And again, when Men live in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, they are without Fear.

Even thoſe who do not ſeriouſly addict themſelves to the Worſhip and Knowledge of God, herein are found fearful: They cry Religion will make fearful, and themſelves are ſo, becauſe they have not to do with it as much as they ſhould: They are afraid to embrace it wholly through wrong apprehenſions and prejudices the Devil hath put into their Head, and yet they are afraid to let it alone. They falſly think that will diſquiet them, and they are certainly diſquieted if they neglect it. They are in a Strait, which puts them upon the outward Profeſſion, to ſatisfie their Fears and Doubts in this matter. The World runs upon miſtakes; for that Religion is their Duty, they are rightly inſtructed by Fear, which is *the beginning of Wiſdom*; but that this which is the only Remedy, ſhould bring them into the *Bondage* thereof, they are falſly informed by him, who was a Lyar from the beginning. His ſubtilty lies in this; for he ſuggeſts, that if a little ſmattering of Religion is irkſome and will make fearful, much more will a great deal thereof; and therefore it is better to have but little to do with it, to prevent further uneaſineſs. Whereas indeed a through Compliance doth bring ſweetneſs and aſſurance: And to them only it is dreadful who do enter, or go but half way. What they do therein, may pacifie natural Conſcience; they may be ſoothed up with vain Hopes or Deceits, but they have no delight in God and his Ordinances: They dare not throughly examine their ſpiritual Condition, for then they would grow fearful, and hence look upon much Religion as a terrible affrightning thing. So their buſineſs is to do juſt enough as they think will ſave the Soul, but are careleſs and negligent as to more. Thoſe Men bring an evil Report upon the good Land, who go only to the Borders, or half the way, and give occaſion to Strangers to conclude it very formidable; for theſe ſeem in the Eye of the World to be Religious, and therefore it is judged of by them. *Not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all* Iſrael, *which are of* Iſrael, Rom. 9.6. The Scripture in what it aſſerts, is nevertheleſs true, though People will

will not come up to it. There is a difference between outward Profeſſors, and who *obey from the Heart*, Rom. 6. 17. And again is to be diſcerned between them, who do with the whole Heart, and who do not; Who comply with *all the Counſel of God*, and who keep ſome of the Commandments and neglect others. Amongſt all thoſe multitudes who in theſe days flock after Chriſt, hear him Preached, and go under his Name, there are but few, who *obſerve all things whatſoever he hath Commanded*, Mat. 28. 20. ſuch are his *Friends*, John 15. 14. and will find acceptance with him. Theſe are in Truth Religious, and Peace ſhall be upon them; for they can apply the Promiſes to themſelves, which will be made good to them; for *As ſure as God is, he is true.* Theſe ſee themſelves already acquitted in that Word, by which all are to be judged at the laſt day. *Herein is our Love made perfect, that we may have Boldneſs in the Day of Judgment, becauſe as he is, ſo are we in this World. There is no fear in Love, but perfect Love caſteth out Fear: Becauſe Fear hath torment; he that feareth is not made perfect in Love*, 1 John 4. 17, 18. When the Life of Jeſus is manifeſted in us, and we love God, then we expect nothing but good from him; we are certain of it becauſe we have his Word, wherein it is impoſſible for God to lye; ſo here muſt be ſtrong aſſurance.

They are ſafe as to the things eternal; and for temporal Evils they are well provided from, *Eccleſ* 9. 1. *Rom.* 8. 28. *Pſal.* 34. 4. *Pſal.* 46. 1, 2. *Pſal.* 56. 3. Now thoſe and alike Promiſes may be applied to any particular Perſon, who is obedient as the Saint was, to whom they were firſt made. See *Rom.* 15. 4. *Heb.* 13. 6. None have reaſon to Fear when they know, *Greater is he that is for us, then thoſe who are againſt us.*

But of all Worldly Dangers that do beſet the Sons of Men, the greateſt are from thoſe of the ſame kind. A Man is worſe then a Wolf to another; by Reaſon of his miſchievous Nature (otherwiſe he is Contemptible and of ſmall Power) he is exceeding dreadful to us. Yet the good Chriſtian is ſecured againſt him by the Promiſes of God. Will the Men of this World frown and look ſternly upon him? *Be not afraid of their Faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, ſaith the Lord*, Jer. 1. 8. Do they threaten? *The Lord is on my ſide, I will not fear what Man can do unto me*, Pſal. 118. 6. Do the greatneſs of Men terrifie him? He need not *fear the Wrath of the King, ſeeing him who is inviſible*, Heb. 11. 17. Do they

they endeavour to vex and torment him as much as they can? *I, even I am he that comforteth you. Who art thou that art afraid of a Man that shall die, and of the Son of Man which shall be made as Grass? And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundation of the Earth?* Isa. 51. 12. 13. God is sometimes pleased not to interpose immediately, but suffers the Blood of his Servants to be shed; yet still they have no cause to be afraid, for he will give strength that they may be able to bear, and assuredly reward them plentifully in the other World, who have endured so much for him in this. In all troubles which do not tend thus far, his Grace is sufficient and suitable to them. Are they despised by Men? Yet they are esteemed by God, and have a Sense of that favour; and so would be of all good Men, if they could alike discern their Sincerity and Uprightness. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; We are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed,* 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9. All their Evils are outwards and seem grievous to those, who judge according to the Flesh, but themselves perceive that inward Rejoycing and Comfort, which more then abundantly make up for all. Whatever seeming hurt should come upon them, God makes amends for it as to the present time; so they have no Reason to fear, or be troubled before hand at the thoughts thereof: As long as they continue in his obedience, and put their trust in God (for otherwise they are none of his) they live contented with the present, and do not disquiet themselves for what may be hereafter. They are only to look to the things that certainly shall be, for they are revealed in his Word, and to provide themselves accordingly: But it is not for them to know the other particular Dispensations, which the Father hath kept in his own Power. In general we may think, *Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?* Job 2. 11. We know what hath been, and what is just before us, and we are told what shall be after this Life; but of the things that may come to pass between this time and the day of our Death, We are assured nothing can befall us without the Will of our Heavenly Father, and we are contented to submit whatever it be. That these things are concealed, is one of the doings of the All-wise God. *For he remembreth that we are Dust*, Psal. 103. 14. He considers how impatient and fretful our Nature is. And if we did certainly fore-know what might happen hereafter, we should torment our selves before our time.

time. It would take away the Reliſh of all mean Enjoyments, and bitterneſs would be the Portion of every Cup, by Reaſon of that we muſt ſuch a day Drink of. *Take therefore no thought for to morrow, for to morrow ſhall take thought for the things of it ſelf, ſufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*, Mat. 6. 34. All endure Vexation in this place, but God is pleaſed to Comfort his People, and ſhew them a way that it may not be ſo grievous unto them as to others. Fears and Cares have filled the Earth, and do fall upon the dwellings of the righteous; but they are not ſo much afflicted under them as other Men. The great Fear is over, and they have no conſtant dread.

He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings: His Heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord, Pſal. 112. 7. *The wicked flee when no Man purſueth, but the righteous are as bold as a Lyon.* Prov. 28. 1. *And the work of Righteouſneſs ſhall be Peace, and the effect of Righteouſneſs, quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.* Iſa. 32. 17. More Texts might be alledged, but the great ſtaggering and objection is in that they are ſo ſeldom fulfilled in the Perſons of Men. They may talk hereof in a general way, and ſeem to apply to themſelves; yet when it is come upon them, they faint: We do not find any ſuch effectual Remedy againſt Fears. It is granted, that Religion doth not unman us; it doth not take away the Senſe of Affliction, nor root up that which is ſo faſt implanted in our Nature, but doth cure the Grievouſneſs of them. We are ſtill in the Fleſh, and nothing is abſolutely taken from us which is common to Men. And then the Faith of us all is ſubject to doubts, from whence ſometimes ariſe Fears in our minds, but yet we do not Labour continually under them, we are not troubled in that meaſure as others. We may through God triumph over the worſt Evils, that nothing ſhall oppreſs or caſt us down. *We truſt we have a good Conſcience, willing to live honeſtly in all things*, Heb. 13. 18. And tho' that may not utterly take away all Fear, yet it doth qualifie, yea, and deſtroy the unpleaſantneſs of Fear. Some will be apt to look upon this as Proud and Vain boaſting; but we owe it only to the Goodneſs and Grace of God, and therefore it is thankfulneſs to ſpeak thereof. It is Duty to encourage others, that they may *come and ſee how Gracious the Lord is, Bleſſed is the Man that truſteth in him*, Pſal. 34. 2, 8. Whoſoever will perform the Condition upon which the Promiſes are, may attain unto this: But for want hereof it is that the Word of God hath ſo little effect upon Men, either

Pſal. 66. 16.

either to allay their Fears, or Comfort them in their trouble. They do aſſent that is good and true; but then is a ſecret Thought, it doth not belong to them, and therefore find no benefit. They do not love God with their whole Heart, nor continue ſtedfaſt in his Covenant, and therefore cannot lay hold of the Gracious part thereof. But thoſe who are redeemed *from all iniquity, a peculiar People*, Tit. 2. 14. come nigh to innocence (it muſt be allowed for real infirmities) and ſo are free from Guilt and Fear; theſe do not dread any Puniſhment in the World to come. Whether Men do comply with the Word of God or not, that hath provided an effectual Remedy for Fear; the more they conform thereto, they are free from it; and again, when they turn aſide, they are ſubject unto it, ſo that it doth either take away the Fears of Men, or wiſely provide againſt them. Not by way of negligence or hardening, for theſe make the frightfulneſs ceaſe for a ſhort time, but brings into the real Danger; whereas an hearkening and yielding unto the ſpiritual Wiſdom, doth alſo keep off the ſlaviſh dread, and moreover ſets ſafe and ſure as to the very things themſelves. Herein it conduces exceeding much to the Happineſs and ſafety of mankind. This may be ſomewhat more manifeſted by a view of the contrary; for let us look upon the Armour of Sin and Diſobedience, What Proof they are againſt the Evils that threaten us. Conſider its Devices to get out of the Danger.

Prov. 1. 33.

Sin and Religion are contrary one to another, as a Rebel is to his rightful Lord; the one would have the Laws of God obſerved, the other trangreſſes againſt them: So upon firſt ſight it may be diſcerned, which is moſt likely to get the Favour or avoid the Diſpleaſure of the Mighty God, who made and is above us all. He hath ſaid, *I will puniſh the World for their Evil, and the wicked for their iniquity:* And hath made as ſevere Declarations from Heaven againſt thoſe who offend or deſpiſe him, as any Earthly King doth to thoſe under him. He is true, as certain as he is God, ſo that he will accompliſh what he hath ſpoken. And then the wicked and ungodly expoſe themſelves to a real Danger from his Wrath and Indignation. The fancied ſecurity they have againſt this is to forget God; they conclude that as long as they do not think of him, it is well enough. Something may be done according to the Cuſtom of the World, and ſo far they go to Church, and do ſome Religious Duties. But after that they will have no more to do with God, he muſt not be in their Feaſts,

Iſa. 13. 11.

Worldly

Worldly buſineſs, nor Company, they neither think nor ſpeak of him, but he is out of mind. This Principle conſiſts of Stubbornneſs and Contempt; for they are not only reſolved wilfully to break his Laws, but alſo make him as it were an underling, as not to ſuffer the Senſe of him to be in their Heart and Mouth, but when pleaſe them; which is to thruſt off his Authority and Government, for *that is over the Hearts of Men:* from this manner of evil doing, there comes to be in them a ſlaviſh Fear and Dread, that they cannot endure the alone imagination, or to hear any thing of God, by way of Truth and Serioufneſs. How uneaſie and diſturbed are they to hear him declared faithfully in his Word? Horror and Doubt do poſſeſs them inſtantly. Who object to Chriſtians as Guilty of Cowardice in fearing that, themſelves are affrightened at the very Thought and Rumour of the ſame thing. *It ſhall be a Vexation only to underſtand the Report*, Iſa. 28.19. They are more afraid of hearing only the Words of God preached or ſpoken of, then others are at what is ſignified by them. Now who have moſt of tormenting Fear, They who cannot endure to hear God named in Praiſe and Inſtruction, or who can ſpeak of him with Gladneſs and Comfort? They who tremble to go into the Sanctuary, or thoſe who can boldly and reverently approach to the Throne of Grace? They who cannot *bear ſound Doctrine*, or thoſe who contentedly *hear the whole Will of God.* They are afraid to hear God ſpeak unto them by Earthen Veſſels, Men of the ſame Paſſions and Fellow-Creatures; but how aſtoniſht and caſt down would they have been to have heard him from *Mount Sinah*, and will be when they come to die, and after that to Judgment. The boldeſt Workers of iniquity dare not go to hear thoſe who expound and apply the Word in Truth, but if to any they had rather ſit under thoſe deceitful handlers; who moſt of all betray a Cauſe, and hence others take Courage in their evil ways.

Even in the wicked there is an acknowledgment and perſwaſion that God is to be Feared, and they could wiſh they did likewiſe. But here obſerve the ſtrangeneſs of the Devils Work, how ſubtle his devices are, he drives them off through their own Fear; there is a little harſhneſs in Religion at firſt, and by fear of this they are kept off. Fear is by reaſon of any ſuppoſed evil, and they have had ſome little experience or imagine it is ſo in Religion, and therefore ſtand off: The harſhneſs is not in the thing it ſelf, but the fault is wholly in themſelves their own contrary

Nature and ſinful Habits. *The whole head is ſick*, Iſa. 1. 5. and therefore cannot Reliſh what is Good, but it ſeems bitter. Notwithſtanding that they ſhould be ſtartled away, as it is a ſign of their Fearfulneſs of Spirit, ſo it is moſt unreaſonable and fooliſh. To flee from that which is frightful in your imagination, and your ſelves have made ſo into a real Danger; to run from that God *who would have you be ſaved*, into the Paws of the roaring Lyon, who *walketh about ſeeking whom he might devour*, is a Fear without knowledge. The ſtriving to put out the Thoughts of what you do Fear, is the certain way to bring your Fears upon you. It is only ſmothering them for a little time, when they will Riſe up worſe and more tormenting. It is the Senſe of us all, that when we have offended God like our Fore-father, *Gen.* 3. 10. *We are afraid and would hide our ſelves.* Indeed if the Godhead were in no wiſe appeaſable, it would be natural and prudent to keep off our unihment, and alſo the Thought thereof as long as we could: But now ſeeing we have ſo plain Revelation throughout his whole Word, what the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* 5. 18, 19, 20. He is to be *reconcil'd* and he calls upon all, *Let the Wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts: And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly Pardon*, Iſa. 55 7. The guilty Sinner will be apt to imagine his offence greater than can be forgiven. Himſelf Anſwers that in the Words following, *My Thoughts are not as your Thoughts.* He ſpeaks by another Prophet. *Thou haſt played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return again to me ſaith the Lord*, Jer. 3. 1. Whatever any Mans paſt Sins have been, yet ſtill he need not Fear to come unto God through *Jeſus Chriſt*, *who came not to Call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

Theſe Doctrines are good and true, but trifled with and abuſed. What was deſigned to give all People Comfort and Hope for amendment of Life, the wicked make uſe of for Preſumption and continuance in Sin; but they will find God is not ſo eaſie as they would think or wiſh him. They muſt not dally with him, as they dare not with their Superiours on Earth. Remember he is Almighty, ſo he is the All-wiſe God; and will no more admit of thoſe repeated Provocations, then now Men of Authority and Wiſdom, do with thoſe who carry themſelves deſpiteſully and diſdainfully towards them. This ſlighting Temper is very common among People, they ſay God is merciful, and though they ſin againſt him

him yet he will be pacified again, which is (as they make it) as if he was what I am unwilling but to name. However theſe Proud Scornful Sinners laugh inwardly at their own conceits but if they did conſider throughly, trembling would ariſe within them that it may be otherwiſe then they imagine, and ſo it will be.

But to paſs by them, Come again to thoſe who are leſs Wicked, who ſtand of in ſome dread and reverence, who think they have ſo highly diſpleaſed God, that they dare not approach to him to beg Pardon. Herein is ſome manners and goodneſs, and ſuch may be aſſured there is mercy with him ſufficient to do away their Tranſgreſſions, notwithſtanding all their Multitude and Aggravation. *Come now and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord, though your ſins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow; though they be Red like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool*, Iſa. 1. 18. Sinners need not be afraid to return unto him from his Word or Nature; there is nothing affrightful in him to the *Willing and Obedient*, thoſe beginning the good work, or who are perfecting the ſame.

There is one who ſecretly repreſents God and Religion to be very diſmal, and happy is he that hath leaſt to do with them. But they are falſe and lying Words: There may be ſome difficulty at firſt in the act of Repentance and Converſion; but when that is got over, the way is ſmooth and plain. But if it were never ſo rugged (as it is not) yet let thoſe fearful Souls whom the Devil holds Captive by this ſnare, conſider: God hath the upper hand in the World, He hath ſent a Meſſage to the Inhabitants of the Earth, commanding ſubjection from them, He hath given them a Law which if they do, they ſhall live by, otherwiſe they ſhall die eternally: This preſent life is appointed for time of Tryal.

Things thus ſtanding, What ſafety doth Satan provide for thoſe he draws unto Rebellion? ſurely none other then this, not to think of their Caſe and Danger. A poor miſerable ſhift by not ſeeing to run into it, whereas had thy ſeen they had avoided it; *Be aſtoniſhed O Heavens, be confounded O Earth!* If I might call the Angels to come and behold the utmoſt folly of the Sons of Men. Were they ſo as thoſe who befool them, in the ſtate of Devils irreverſibly doomed to Damnation, then in truth to put in mind of God and Eternity would be to Torment them before their time; But ſeeing they have a day of Grace and Salvation,

on, it is both natural and reasonable to consider that they may make sure of it, and to be told of the Wrath to come that they may flee from it; for it were something if they could turn away the evil by not thinking thereon; but *the Gulph is fixed, the fire is prepared*, and they cannot be removed or quenched only by the carelesnes of those who go the ready way to plunge themselves in. They foolishly think to escape by this their design, not attending to what is Written; *The wicked is snared in the Work of his own hands. The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God*, Psal. 9. 16, 17. There is no safety for the negligent and careless World. If their heart was not darkened or become altogether inconsiderate, they might reason thus with themselves. Am I terrified with the uneasines of Religion, and shall I to avoid that for a little time bring upon my self Eternal Anguish of Mind? Are the strivings of Gods Spirit irksome now for a Season? They are only so becaus you will not comply with them, yet will you by resisting them draw on the Spirits of Darknes to Torment for evermore? If that be so grievous which is now for a short time, it will be much more so that shall last to all Eternity; and therefore the les is to be submitted unto to avoid the greater. We count him Childish and Foolish who will not take a bitter Pill to recover Health; And it is ten thousand times more so in him who will not *sorrow after a Godly sort*, 2 Cor. 7. 9. To prevent the damnation of Hell. That is afraid to shed a few Penitential Tears, to avoid Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth; To stand in awe of a little thing, and run into a greater, is as if we should run from the shaking of a leaf into a place of Dragons and Scorpions. Men conceive more hardship in the ways of Godlines then really there is; Strangers are affrightened at that which the acquainted find to be Pleasantnes and Peace. All the uneasines in Religion is at first, or to those who will not conform wholly to it, which true Courage and Resolution might go throughly with, and then that would wear off. The Grace of God doth very much assist those, who seek and work together with it.

The two Principal hindrances are Fear and Enjoyment of Lust; they may be comprehended under one, for there is a Fear of Misery in missing it, but the frightning of trouble of Mind, and a little heavines hinders from coming to Repentance. That which was implanted in Man to bring him unto God, is so transverted as to keep him off; such is only a foolish and more exceeding Fear:

And

And yet theſe would be thought to have leaſt who indeed have moſt. The reaſon why thy ſeem Fearleſs in the ſight of the World, is becauſe they make a ſhew not to care for God and Religion, inſinuating they let that alone for Fearful People. It is manifeſt what ſets them a talking at this rate, their negligence and ſtupidity, Ignorance and unbelief, their inconſideration and hardneſs of heart; their continued endeavours to ſtifle the ſence of God, to be ſo narrowly confined within themſelves, that they look only upon themſelves, not into the World, or who made that and gave them Being. They grow up they know not how, neither do they mind it: and then they look only to the preſent time, and what is juſt before them. By ſuch kind of ways they come to be Deſultors and unmindful, but that it is not through want of Fear may be further illuſtrated by their fear in reference to other things.

That keeps them in ungodlineſs and tranſgreſſion, ſo it hath a main influence on the common actions of Life. This being contrary to their Proud Nature, they endeavour to conceal and keep cloſe as much as they can; in their words they would make a ſhew of the contrary, but truth will come forth: Fear (as hath been ſaid) is by reaſon of any thing apprehended as evil. If they have had ſome experience of it, they dread the ſame thing for the time to come; or if not, they imagine it may be evil, and conſequently are afraid to fall into it. Indeed thoſe leſſer and ordinary evils of life being ſo common, it doth not put them into trembling and amazement, but they are concerned ſo far as to avoid them. When they fly from the leaſt evil and the ſhadow thereof, who cannot endure the leaſt Pain, Grief, or Diſcontent, and can only ſubject themſelves to dangers becauſe they are unknown and future; this argues a timorous diſpoſition. Their reſorting continually unto all Pleaſures, proceeds from a kind of Fear to loſe them, and alſo of ſuffering Vexation: 'Tis not altogether ſweetneſs which invites (for conſtancy makes them ſatiating) but they are ſought after as a preventive of inward Sorrow they ſhould otherwiſe labour under. What makes Men thruſt themſelves into all Company? The delight whereof ceaſes when continually had, but they are afraid to converſe with themſelves, leaſt their own thoughts ſhould begin to accuſe them. They will offend God who is not ſeen, if thereby they may pleaſe their ſuperiours; The lower ſort are the inſtruments of great Mens Oppreſſion

preſſion and Injuſtice: they accuſe and inform of one another to get the favour and avoid the diſpleaſure of ſuch a Rich and mighty Neighbour; And again, he is afraid of thoſe above, equal, or under him. Even the greateſt have inward tremblings, and are willing to content the people: If they do not fear God, they do fear Men: and who make a pretence not to regard them, yet they are horribly afraid of many things beſides, as Diſgrace, Pain, Sickneſs and the event thereof. So Fears do go round, and tho' they do not fix on the right Object, yet on every thing beſides that hath the leaſt power to do hurt, and all is by reaſon of that. They fear the Work of his hands, but do not fear the Maker of them all. And the only Reaſon of that is, becauſe they neither
Iſa. 57.11. know nor ſee him, and he keeps ſilence: for would not theſe very Men who adore viſible Greatneſs and tremble at every thing, do the like alſo if they perceived the leaſt Glimpſe of Gods Glory, or had the leaſt Manifeſtation of his dreadful Majeſty. They would then crouch and creep, as now they lift up and exalt themſelves. An Example we have in *Nebuchadnezar*, Dan. 3. Verſe 15, 19, 24, 27. Upon the leaſt ſhewing himſelf forth, the mighty Ones do ſubmit preſently. But if he did ſo always, or for the moſt part, there could be no Tryal of free obedience. It would be no thanks for them to fear the Lord, for they could not help it. And they might Fear him as Slaves and Captives, not as Saints and Children; They might ſtand in awe of, and yet not obey him. Thoſe who commit ſo many Sins to avoid little temporal Inconveniencies, it is becauſe they are afraid of them: And they venture upon the other, becauſe as yet they ſee no harm happen, but did they behold *that Furnace of Fire which ſhall be to the Workers of iniquity*, theſe ſame Perſons would be as much afraid of that, as now they are of the Temptation which leads them over to it. Who are now fearful of every Evil, would be the ſame as to thoſe of the other World, had they but ſuch a ſight thereof as departed Souls have. The Wicked and Prophane would preſently become as Religious as the moſt ſtrict and rigid Fellow is now in the Worlds Opinion, and ſtill no thanks to them; for what is it in any that ariſes out of Bed and Shifts for himſelf in a Night Fire? There would be no Faith nor Love, nor any thing worth the leaſt Acceptation. And thoſe things are removed out of ſight for exerciſe of them all.

There is that in the natural Man, which if he would turn and order aright, might bring him to Heaven and Happineſs. *The Lord knoweth our Frame*, Pſal. 103. 14. And hath put thoſe things in us all, that if we would comply with them, we muſt neceſſarily lay hold of the good and avoid the evil ſet before us. That Fear which now drives from every little thing, would much more oblige us to make haſte to eſcape from the ſtormy Wind and Tempeſt, the Damnation of Hell. It ſeems ſtrange that though God hath done ſo much for Mankind, who gives to the worſt ſuch offers and aſſiſtances of his Grace that they might do otherwiſe if they would, yet ſo many ſhould periſh; but none ever did or ſhall hereafter, unleſs he both reſiſts the Grace of God and doth violence to his own Inclination and Paſſions. Self-preſervation and Fear which make up ſo much of every Man would have kept him, if he had wiſely conſidered where the greateſt dangers lay, for all of this ſhort and vain life are not much to be valued. And yet the affrightfulneſs of them would have ſtirred up a greater care againſt thoſe which are not ſeen, but revealed by that God who cannot lie to be much more terrible then what we now ſee and endure.

It would be endleſs to trace out all wicked Mens Actions, for having run from the way everlaſting, they are gone into many By-paths and wandrings, but leaving theſe, we may at laſt bring them all up to theſe two heads of Pride and Fear, which might eaſily be altered into Hope of Eternal Life and Fear of the Wrath to come; Then they would be converted and become Chriſtians. However, at preſent they eſteem the Actions of thoſe fooliſh and ridiculous, yet in this they condemn themſelves; for they act after the very ſame manner in reference to the things of this life, as the others to that which is to come. We are all Men ſtill, and though our Actions differ as Heaven from Earth, yet they all at firſt ſpring from the ſame common Principles. Are the Men of this World willing to be happy? So are we. Are they afraid to be Miſerable? So are we. But then they look only for the preſent time, and we do the ſame, taking in alſo that which is to come. They mind the things of the Earth, we think of them as much as they are worthy of, and have our converſation in Heaven.

All their devices periſh in the uſing, their endeavours after Happineſs lie in preſent enjoyments which ceaſe and come to nothing whilſt they are had: their preventives of miſery are only ſtupefactions to make them unmindful of that for a Moment, of which they are to be ſenſible for evermore. The time of Hardening, and the day of Provocation paſſeth away, and they haſte to come into his power againſt whom they have behaved themſelves Rebelliouſly and Contemptuouſly. All their ſafety conſiſts in their hands in the days of their fleſh, and that only becauſe God is pleaſed not to interpoſe, which he might if he would, but ordinarily doth not till towards the Concluſion of their ſpace of wickedneſs. There is but poor protection in it, we ſee the whole in this life: a little Worldly proſperity and ſenſual Pleaſure is all they muſt ever truſt unto. And this mixt with ſo many Fears, Diſquiets and Miſeries, that it is not worthy to be accounted of; as alſo it flyeth ſo quick, and will ſtand in no ſtead. The days paſt are the ſame as if they had not been at all, the preſent ſlips between their fingers, every minute ſome of the gratifyings of the fleſh are loſt, and the fewer remain behind. Which will be catcht at, and paſs away in the ſame manner; then cometh the end when they ſhall be bereaved of all, when their merry life, as they called it, but did not find it ſo, juſt like a ſleep when one awaketh every now and then diſturbedly; but when they have ſlept out their ſleep, they have found nothing that will avail them in the only time of need.

Of the Fear of Death.

We have looked upon the Fears of Men in the midſt of life; We have ſeen how they behave themſelves when they are luſty and ſtrong; We have heard their diſdainful Talk and proud Boaſting, which in ſome meaſure hath been detected of Hypocriſie and Falſhood. What are their Thoughts and Proviſion againſt Death, either when it is afar off or it approacheth nigh? Now it is certain we do not (nor before) enter upon meer Words, but reality; for all the living know they muſt die, and every one is ſenſibly frightened with the apprehenſion thereof. *Bildad* ſtiles it the *King of Terrors*, Job 18. 14. As ſuch it poſſeſſes the minds of all Men at firſt, this is not denyed: And the other alſo would be no controverſie, unleſs contrary practiſe did make it doubtful, Whether Wickedneſs or Obedience is the beſt preſervation againſt the Fear and Danger of Death. If it be made evident for the latter, the ſame concluſion again follows that Reli-

Religion tends neceſſarily to the Happineſs and Safety of Mankind.

In Truth, this point is moſt worthy of Obſervation and inſiſting upon; for though we are ſo much taken up with preſent things, we ſnatch at all Eaſe and Pleaſure, and decline every little pain or Vexation; yet Worldly Happineſs or Miſery is not much to be valued, ſeeing the beſt which happens here will never make one truly Happy, nor the worſt Miſerable: It ſo ſoon paſſeth away whatever delights or diſquiets. Nothing is ſo good here as to be truly deſirable, Nothing ſo bad but what can be endured: There is little difference whether we have a Calm and Smooth Voyage, or are toſſed to and fro with Tempeſts; but the only thing to be minded and care taken for, is, where we ſet a ſhore on the land of Eternity, *for here we have no continuing City*, Heb. 13. 14. One Generation cometh and another goeth, Thoſe that were before us, are gone, we living drop away, now one and then another, the people which ſhall be born, they ſhall die in like manner. This we know, though we do not ſo much conſider of as we ſhould, we are all concerned in it though too many are unmindful. Wiſe and Fooliſh comprehend all Mankind, ſo they may be diſtinguiſhed and known by this one thing, for nothing is ſo worthy of the concern and regard of a wiſe Man as death is. It is prudence to keep off and provide againſt all evils, and if the World calls thoſe wiſe who are ſo buſied about Toyes and Trifles, about the attainment of every little good and avoiding of every little evil, much more is he who doth the ſame as to the greater. If every one is diligently employed how it fares with him now, ſo doth an underſtanding Man look about what ſhall become of him after this vain, ſhort and uncertain life is ended.

In this great matter there are two deſigns in the World: the one is to drive out the thoughts of Death as much as they can, to be unmindful of their dying day that it is grown into a Proverb, till it is upon them, and ſo they go away when their time comes. The ſecond is of them who both pray, and alſo put in practiſe *So teach us to number our Days that we may apply our hearts to Wiſdom*, Pſal. 90. 12. Which of the twain is moſt wiſe and happy in their way, may be a little cleared.

The reaſon of the firſt manner of doing is becauſe the thoughts of Death are Melancholy and Uncomfortable, ſo they think they do well to be rid thereof. Amidſt their jovialties ſometimes a word

or accident puts them in mind they ſhall die, which raiſes an inward damp. I know there are many ſayings and ſentences concerning Death in a Ludicrous and Ignorant way; But this talk doth likewiſe proceed from the ſame reaſon as one is of vain Swearing, by commonneſs of Speech to take off the dread, but ſtill they fear it may be otherwiſe. They have not ſo much courage as the Epicures of Old, who would have a Skull or Sceleton brought up to their Feaſts and Carouzings to make them improve their enjoyments to the utmoſt. Now there hath ſo much light and revelation came into the World that the moſt jolly perſons cannot do this to increaſe their Mirth. They can run with a certain violence towards Death, hear a witty Expreſſion, if it comes out of the Mouth of Unbelievers, but to ſit down and deliberate, to examine the *evidence of things not ſeen*, they are afraid to do that, but yet muſt be let into them: There are ſome in theſe days who will ſpeak out in a Bravery, as if they wiſhed the time of Deciſion would come, they do not care how ſoon they are ſatisfied, whether things are ſo as declared from the Pulpits. They would be no longer held in doubt or uncertainty, Whether there be a life after this, not much unlike thoſe in the Prophets time, *Iſa.* 5. 19. *Amos.* 5. 18. It is all but proud Diſcourſe; for would they have it experienced in their own Perſons? They do not care for that, however they ſhall in due time. Or would they have one riſe from the dead and declare it unto them? Why the Son of God who came down from Heaven out of the Boſome of the Father, and known his counſel, hath declared as much: and there ſhall be no other ſign given. If things were made a little more plain and revealed then they are already, there could not be the leaſt doubtfulneſs, for every one muſt aſſent where is no poſſibility of denyal, and then there would be no Tryal of Faith or good Life, there would be no diſcerning what manner of perſons theſe are, who ſpeak arrogantly againſt the wiſe Counſels and determinations of God. But ſince God is pleaſed to hold his Tongue and is gone afar off; the words of ſome are Saucy, and their actions Contemptuous againſt him; yet theſe very Men dare not commune with their own heart after this manner: out of Pride and affectation of Wit they will thus talk in Company, and alſo they think themſelves more ſecure and exempt from inward Horrour when amongſt their Companions in ſin.

Others oppreſſed with affliction or Wearineſs of Life or now and then in a ſullen Fit may pretend to ſet light of Death; but there is no real Comfort for the wicked againſt it, they are not abſolutely freed from the Fears thereof. Some will acknowledge as much, but then they ſay it is natural, and every ſort of Creature doth the ſame. This is true, for Self-Preſervation runs through all that hath Life and Motion, and the ſame is in Man alſo, he hath the like things pertaining to Life, the ſame natural Inclinations and Averſations which the ſenſitive kind hath. All Men of both ſorts good and bad, *He that Sacrificeth, and he that Sacrificeth not*, are willing to continue, and they abhor Diſſolution. As their Fleſh is common ſo are they Partakers of the ſame things, Thus far they are equal: but then comes the difference, for there are Fears and Hopes which point beyond all this amounts unto. The Beaſts know nothing what ſhall become of them, and fear to die; now if a Man were to die as a Beaſt dieth, he would know the worſt of what would happen unto him, to turn into Corruption, and be inſenſible of all things. Indeed there might be a trembling and ſurprizal at this, yet this alone would never cauſe ſuch ſtrange Terrors and Amazement as are in wicked Men, neither would there be ſuch joyful hope and expectation in the righteous. If there was an end, and no more, it would be all one as before we were born, and we cannot apprehend any thing extremely dreadful in that. Many would be contented that they might for all Eternity thus remain in ſilence, and really wiſh they had never ſeen Light. But this is not all, The bare lying in the Grave is the leaſt of the fear of Sinners. The Body turns into Earth, but the Spirit returns unto God that gave it, and to find him angry, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. 10.31. None but he, or the Executioners of his wrath are dreaded. But the upright Man can ſee through Death, and behold Life. He looks even through the Land of Darkneſs, and Light riſeth up unto him. The wicked doth not fear the natural Effects Death more then another. If he thinks or is told any thing of God or Judgment to come, he is troubled above meaſure: The Darkneſs of the lower parts of the Earth is not ſo affrightful unto him, as the Horrors of utter Darkneſs: He had rather his Body were rotting in the Duſt, for it is there without Senſe, as be painful or languiſhing in the Bed, but the Conſternation of his Soul flying out he knows not where, makes him deſire to continue

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in that miſerable Condition. It is not Corruption he is ſo much afraid of, as that his Body ſhould riſe up again at the laſt day; if he might have his Will it ſhould continue for ever where it was. The Miſeries and Tireſomneſs of Life could make him contented to ſleep for evermore, but then ſome Glimpſes of a reſtleſs eternal State makes him wiſh to ſtay here. Theſe things and more of the like ſad Nature, the conſidering Sinnner finds t be true, both in the Courſe of his Life, and more eſpecially towards the Cloſe thereof; he fears Death with another kind of dread then what is natural, or other Creatures of the ſamelikeneſs, (but not of the ſame wickedneſs) do.

Here again it may be ſurmiſed, that he is frightened with Tales and Stories as Children that go in the dark. Whence do they come? Is the Scripture *a cunningly deviſed Fable*? 2 Pet. 1. 16. Are all Children? Are all Fools? How comes it to paſs that the Wiſeſt, yea, and thoſe who ſet themſelves not to believe theſe things are ſtill terrified by them? Surely there is Truth and themſelves (though they never ſo much endeavour) cannot ſhake it off. They will haſtily Prate (for they cannot ſpeak ſoberly and ſay ſo) that all Revelation is Fiction; but their own Fears give them the Lye, for they moſt of all Fear the dreadful part thereof. The Threatnings are only to the ungodly and diſobedient, which any one may ceaſe to be, and ſo avoid them.

But inſtead thereof Men betake themſelves to the old general Policy of not thinking before-hand. What Senſeleſsneſs is this? There being a certain and future evil to run into it, becauſe they will not foreſee and avoid it. The fooliſh and oppoſite Actings of Men are a Confirmation of Faith, for hereby the Scripture is found true, particularly what is written, *Rev.* 12. 9. Is Death evil? It is only ſo to evil Men, which any one may refrain to be. Is Death evil? Why it will remain ſo if you do not think of it; and if it be ſo ſad, that you cannot think thereof, to endure it will be worſe, there is a way ſhewed to take off the ſadneſs from your preſent Thoughts, and the real Danger that follows. What can be more unreaſonable then not to endeavour to avoid that, which every one may and is called upon to do. *Caſt away from you all your Tranſgreſſions, whereby ye have tranſgreſſ'd, and make you a new Heart and a new Spirit: For why will ye die O Houſe of* Iſrael? Ezek. 18. 31.

The purpoſe of God is fully Ratified and Confirmed, whether Men

Men believe or not; Revelation and Reaſon do make it the more known and manifeſt unto us. *Life and immortality are brought to Light through the Goſpel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. and alſo there is an aſſured Teſtimony within us Witneſſing the ſame: Both which are ſufficient to leave us without excuſe, to clear Gods Juſtice, and aggravate our own Folly and Condemnation, if we do not take notice and provide accordingly. There have already *came Meſſengers from God to make the Careleſs* Ethiopians *afraid*, Ezek. 30. 9. to make the negligent World look about themſelves. Chriſt hath thoſe which declare the ſame every Lords-day. So there is none living in this Countrey, but either hath or might have heard of theſe things. And yet can they ſhew themſelves unconcerned? When immortality and endleſs Life are diſcourſed of, are they ſo ſtupid to care for none of theſe things? Who are ſo buſied with the little Affairs of this preſent time which ſhortly ſhall end, and to be unmindful of that long Tract of Eternity which will quickly begin, but never end. Whether you ſhall take up your everlaſting Habitation in Heaven or Hell, doth as nearly concern you, as now what you ſhall eat or drink, how to obtain ſuch a Profit or ſuch a Pleaſure, and avoid a loſs or inconvenience. If you will not have to do with theſe things, have to do with nothing at all, for nothing comes more near, or is more worthy of your ſerious regard. If you are Wiſe you will take heed to your ſelves in Worldly Matters, for ſome miſchief may otherwiſe fall upon you, which by Caution might have been prevented. And ſuffer your ſelves to be forewarned, that only the Breath in your Noſtrils holds you as yet from being plunged into the greateſt Evil, and deprived of the greateſt Good. You will be liable to this as long as you remain inconſiderate, and that you cannot long neither, for you muſt die, that is certain as you now live, and the time thereof will be as ſurely here as the preſent Day is, and after that you will be mindful of the things we are ſpeaking of, do what you can. All negligence will inſtantly vaniſh in the other World. When you are once ſhut under Hatches by Death, you will ſufficiently lament for your former Careleſsneſs and Stupidity, and will be infinitely more vext, that you did give way to that with which you now pleaſe your ſelves. In the place of Darkneſs, it will be no ſmall Addition of Miſery to remember that Light which you deſpiſed, and was offered you, that you might not come there.

What

What can be ſaid more to that univerſal deſtroyer of Souls, Stubbornneſs and Negligence? There hath been too much ſaid already, for it hath a preſent Anſwer to all, which may be alledged to the contrary, I will not read, I will not mind it; all that can be written may ſignifie no more then blank Paper. But yet others may know, and themſelves will find, that whatſoever is delivered by neceſſary Conſequence from Scripture will be fulfilled. *Truth is Gods, and bears his Image and Superſcription.* And who deſpiſes the one, will be as much deſpiſed by him. If People will ſtamp the Kings Coyn under foot, or are wilfully reſolved not to receive it, he will reſent and puniſh the Affront. The Lord and Governour of the World will not ſuffer without Puniſhment himſelf to be diſ-regarded by Earth-Worms, who are as nothing in Compariſon of him: Judge your ſelves, whether it is equal? When he acquaints Men of Heaven and Happineſs, ſhewing them the way to it, that they ſhould *ſcorn the pleaſant Land, and give no Credence unto his Word:* When he would ſet up his Kingdom in the Hearts of Men; that they ſhould thruſt him out, and will not have to do with him. Conſider he is God, and you are but Men, what vaſt difference theſe two import. Is it not meet to pay as much reſpect to him, as we do to our Superiors on Earth? The King who rules over us, hath the Subjection of the outward Man, in things pertaining to the Welfare and Peace of his Kingdom, and it is freely given him, though there is no other benefit, but to live for a while ſafely under his Protection, and that we think (as it is indeed) ſufficient. The Government of God reaches further to the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, all one as Words and Actions, even the whole Man: But then it is for his preſent Peace, and he will reward him with eternal Happineſs hereafter, which none of our Maſters upon Earth would or can do. As much as God is greater then Man, ſo it is juſt his Command ſhould extend further; and yet if the Monarchs of ſeveral Nations were ſo deſpiſed by their reſpective Subjects as God is by us (to our ſhame be it ſpoken) but more eſpecially by the ungodly part of mankind; how would they take it? And God is pleaſed to declare that he will deal ſo with us, as we do with one another. The abomination of iniquity is ſet forth in Scripture by thoſe *who ſay unto God, Depart from us; for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways*, Job 21. 14. *By not regarding his Work, and deſpiſing his Word*, Iſa. 5. 12, 24. ſo Pſal. 50. 17.

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and such like, which plainly declares, that he resents it all to the utmost. If we did not conceive of Sin this way, by Mens behaving themselves Contemptuously and stubbornly against an infinite and Glorious God, we should think hardly of his Justice in preparing such exceeding Punishments, for what are called light offences, but as great as despising of him, who doth so much excel the *Stout* Inhabitants of the Earth. If there was but a Probability, as we have full Evidence and Demonstration of his Reigning over us, yet we should not carry our selves in a slighting manner towards him. I tremble to think seriously of our demeanour and Arrogancy towards him, whom we call the Lord our God. Such usage might be befitting a *Baal* and *Ashtaroth*, Heathen idols and the work of our own hands, but in no Wise to the *Living Lord, The Great King upon all the Earth*, the *HOLY, WISE, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY. If thou O Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand!* Lord help our unbelief, help our ignorance, help our infirmities. We are in a World of sensible things, which betray us too often to forget thee, but we will not always do thus wickedly, or put thee off with Scorn and Neglect; for a willing and continued Transgression after this manner there is no excuse. When God sends a Message to take no notice of it, is the height of impiety; *I will judge you according to the Fruit of your doings, O House of* Israel. Is your Faith at an uncertainty, and doth that make you regardless? Why, you are required to use the means, to attend unto the things that are spoken, and weigh fully with your selves, whether indeed they are so. Before the Gospel was written, *Faith came by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*, Rom. 10. 17. So it doth now, and also by reading, that Testimony, Miracles, Arguments and Demonstrations which must prevail when admitted into sincere Consideration, but this you will not do; *Beware therefore least that come upon you, which was spoken of in the Prophets, Behold ye Despisers, and Wonder, and Perish, for I work a Work in your days, a Work which ye shall in no Wise believe, though a Man declare it unto you*, Acts 13. 40 41. God will not take advantage over mankind, without first making known his Good-will and Pleasure, what he requires of them: For we may be bold to say, it would not have been consistent with Justice to punish Creatures for what they knew not, or could not know. *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right*, Gen 18 25. The Case of the Heathen World is shewed, *Rom.* 1. throughout,

Mal. 3. 13.

Psal. 130. 3, 4.

and *Rom.* 2. 12, 14, 15. *Acts* 15. 17. And though of old Revelation was more * peculiar to the Land of *Judea*, yet that was further a ſign to all the Nations of the World; but he will be pleaſed to deal with them moſt certainly according to Equity and Right. But to us the Goſpel is fully made known. It was neceſſary God ſhould diſcover himſelf to Man ſome way; where he did it by implanting natural Principles of good and diſcerning of Evil within himſelf, he will judge by them. But in theſe latter days, he hath revealed his Word more fully and univerſally, and ordered it to be written in a Book that it may be for the time to come hereafter. Nothing in the whole World can be ſaid to be the written Will of God, beſides the Scripture, wherein are Prophecies fulfilled. *God bearing them Witneſs both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt according to his own Will*, Heb 2 4. Who ſpoke this Word that is come down to us, which teſtifies of Reſurrection of the dead, eternal Judgment, Heaven and Hell in as plain Words as poſſibly things can be expreſſed.

* Exod. 19. 5.

How fain would People either *cauſe the Holy One of* Iſrael *to ceaſe from before them*, Iſa. 30. 11. or themſelves ceaſe and come to nothing? That whilſt they were living they ſinned againſt him, ſo when Dead be as nothing, and not the Objects of Puniſhment. They would willingly exempt his Providence from them, but not lay aſide their Tranſgreſſions againſt him: and then would utterly periſh to avoid his Truth and Juſtice. What Tricks and Shifts are Men put unto, to gain truce and ſafety for their Wickedneſs? But they may have a Truce for a little while, but all their Devices cannot attain unto ſafety. They may take the ſeveral kinds of *Opium*, Ignorance, Unbelief, Negligence, hardneſs of Heart, perverſe Diſputings; but they will be all ſpent as ſoon as their Souls depart from the Body. If it was for a thouſand, or ten thouſand years (all that would have an end) it were ſomething; but when only for ſeventy or eighty years, their Crafts and ſinful Provocations are the more fooliſh. To be ſoothed up a little when it ends in Ruin, when this manner of doing doth the more aſcertain Deſtruction to themſelves, and make it worſe, for they might otherwiſe have prevented it. What can be more imprudent? Let them take as much Pleaſure in the mean while as the World affords, their whole Life is but running towards Death. And therefore let them make ſpeed, and haſten

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out of the Evil way; for God hath moſt certainly ordered a Life after this, either of eternal Happineſs or Miſery. This is taught, this is affirmed conſtantly.

And though ſome may raiſe Queſtions and Scruples, *How can theſe dry bones live?* Or the Soul exiſt ſeparately? Yet *they err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* He can do more then we conceive or imagine. We are not to meaſure his Omnipotence by our weak underſtanding. He hath ſaid it ſhall be, and we are to leave that to him, which himſelf will accompliſh.

For the Lord God of Recompences ſhall ſurely requite, Jer. 51. 56. He could always do ſo in this Life if he pleaſed, but his general Decree is to ſpare Men here; this is the ſpace of Forbearance and Long-ſuffering, but afterwards is Puniſhment. This is the time of Tryal, but hereafter is retribution. Why will not Man know of this before-hand? *Yea, the Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, obſerve the time of their coming, but my People know not the Judgment of the Lord,* Jer. 8. 7. They will not throughly conſider thereof. They may juſt call to mind, how they ſhall be deprived of all things in this World, of that Pain and Sickneſs, diſtortion of Countenance, pale Aſpect that Death makes, they are forced to think of theſe things, becauſe they are viſible; but the only uſeful part is neglected as it is an inlet into Eternity. If there was no more in Death then what we now ſee in its worſt Circumſtances, it were not worth while to concern ones Self ſo much concerning it, but endure it when it comes, and there is an end. If attended with ſome weeks Sickneſs or Pain, we ſuffer as much in the Courſe of our Lives, and for the laſt ſtrugling or gaſp, that is ſeldom longer then a ſingle day, and then the moſt acute Pain do deſtroy the ſenſible parts, and a dangerous Sickneſs is leaſt felt: There is no need of making ſo much Proviſion againſt it. But now we have aſſurance, that this current of time is ſwallowed up in the Gulph of Eternity, and therefore it is worthy the buſineſs of all our days, to take heed into what kind thereof it enters. Eſpecially when by the Grace and Power put into our hands, we may make it to end into which we will. And though none covet Death, yet God hath ordered, that if we will not accept of his Goodneſs, we muſt be liable to the ſeverity of his indignation.

Here Man would draw back and not run the hazzard of either. He would be immortal and not die, this is a fore-shewing of his future Condition, but it cannot be here. Then he would live as long as he can: In Gods name let him endeavour so, but withal go the way to make Death Comfortable. Is he afraid when it approaches nigh? And will he not take away the cause of his Fear? Let him repent and turn from every Evil way, and then it will do him no harm, come when it will. In past Ages many were desirous to live some few years longer, yet they are dead, and what doth the short respite avail them, if not employed to the foresaid use? Those who are so over careful of their Health, if not of their Salvation also (as these things have been too often put asunder) do notwithstanding go away at last: as to the first they were cumbred in vain (but the other Labour would not have been so, 1 *Cor.* 15. 54.) for perhaps they might prevent Death a little time, but yet still it comes and will be more terrible, if the only thing needful be not as much minded. Let the wicked World search after all the Policies that can be had, do all things to pacifie (for satisfie they cannot) their minds, yet they have no Preservation against the Fear and Danger of Death. There is more help to be had in Faith and Obedience then all their Stratagems. However they Brave it out in time of Health and Vigour, yet the wickedness of the wicked will come to an end. The Generations of them have been, and are in Rebellion, but the single Persons fall away day by day. Now goeth one and then another. *An Evil, an only Evil, behold is come, an end is come, it watcheth for thee, behold it is come, The morning is come upon thee, O thou that dwellest in the Land, the time is come, the day of trouble is neer, and not the sounding again of the Mountains*, Ezek. 7. 5, 6, 7. The time of last Sickness and Death hath already came upon many Millions of wicked Men, several at this instant lie strugling, and those who now walk so disdainfully, and do not value any sort of Sin, in a short time themselves will come to be in the same Condition. And then if they are the least sensible or apprehensive, What Fear and Horror are they in? What dreadful Thoughts do arise in their minds? They having not given Glory unto God, but on the contrary dishonoured him, must be horribly surprized about their Feet stumbling upon the dark Mountains; as their Souls do look over into the other World, they shrink back and would fain stay where they are: Now a flashing of

Numb. 32. 13, 14.

of Thunder makes them ſtartle, Hell opens a little as ready to receive them, and they leap back; then a ſad preſage doth diſcompoſe and trouble them. If they would but at the laſt *give Glory to God*, diſcover the utmoſt they ſuffer to warn By-ſtanders, to acknowledge Gods Juſtice, and their own Sinfulneſs, Who knows how kindly he may take it from them? ſee *Jer.* 3. 12, 13. But ſome as they were diſobedient in their life time, are ſullen in their Death; or aſhamed and not willing to take diſcredit upon themſelves, for Pride goes out laſt with the body of ſin. Otherwiſe they might own as much, as indeed ſome have done and it was never the worſe for them. And who have ſtrove to conceal, yet ſudden words drop forth, and other ſigns manifeſt their ſad Condition. All their ſinful Pleaſures are vaniſhed away like ſmoke, and leave this blackneſs behind; If never ſo much hath been done to pleaſe Men, that ſignifies nothing, for they cannot ſupport him, they are under the ſame Law and ſhall not be able to deliver themſelves. The World and all things therein are paſſed away, what he hath done as to them ſtands in no ſtead, that was the Enemy which beguiled, now ſhrinks away, and leaves him in this forelorn Condition. His body is to deſcend into the Bars of the Pit, which till the Reſurrection will be no more then a Stone or any other lump of Clay under the Earth, but where the Soul ſhall be received, is the Anguiſh and Vexation. If ſin was a thing of naught, as we are apt to Imagine, God who is good, and his Judgments are Righteous altogether, would never inflict ſuch puniſhments for the ſame, as we ſee he doth, when his Wrath is kindled but a little, when he begins to execute. Sin receives its aggravation from the Perſon of him againſt whom it is committed.

The end is come, it watcheth for thee, Ezek. 7. 6. It is ſtrange that the living will not take warning by what they ſee hath happened to others. Haſt thou known, or heard of any one that hath died in his ſins? All the pleaſure of them is gone, and the ſame thing with him as if it had not been at all as to the delightful Nature. Was he in an Agony or Stupid at the laſt? Doſt not thou think it would have been better for that ſame perſon, if he had lived in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs inſtead of Sin and Iniquity? For the fancied trouble, but the real delight of the former would have been paſt and gone, as the clamorous and outward Pleaſures, but the ſilent and inward Vexation of the latter now is. Then

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he would have had ſomething to truſt unto, but now he hath not. If thou continueſt in ſin (which God forbid) juſt the ſame will be thy Caſe: Whether thou mindeſt it or not, the day will come when thou ſhalt be like him. The Scripture teſtifies ſufficiently unto all that they do not thoſe things, *the end of which is Death*, Rom. 6. 21. To be wretched in this life and afterwards alſo is a ſad thing. What can be done too much to prevent either, but eſpecially the laſt? The firſt may be ſomewhat eaſed, the latter may be wholly taken away. And the only means to do it is by Submiſſion and Obedience unto Almighty God: That in this time which he hath given to prove us, we may be ſuch as he would have us be. All reaſonable Creatures are either obedient Subjects or Enemies. He holds all our breath in for a ſpace, he takes it away and we die: *The Wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs, but the Righteous hath hope in his Death*, Prov. 14. 32.

The condition of Good Men in their Death.

Now that relies upon the promiſes of God, which are as ſure as the Foundations of the Earth; *He upholdeth all things by the word of his power*, Heb. 1. 3. And alſo he doth ſupport the Faith of his Servants by the Word of his Truth. Innumerable are the places of Holy Scripture to give them the moſt perfect aſſurance that it ſhall be well with them after Death, as *Mat.* 25. 34, 40, 46. *John* 8. 51. *John* 3. 16. *John* 6. 33. *John* 12. 26. *John* 14. 2, 3, 19. *John* 20. 17. *Rev.* 14. 13. *Phil.* 1. 21, 22. *Col.* 3. 4. 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Rom.* 8. 1, 15, 16, 17. 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. *Eph.* 1. 13, 14. 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. *Rom.* 2. 7. Tit. 1. 2. I might tranſcribe the whole Goſpel, for it hath relation to this purpoſe to promote a converſation according to it whilſt we live, and the Happineſs we ſhall be partakers of after we die; as ſure as God hath ſpoken to us by his Son, all this ſhall be fulfilled. The Lord Chriſt muſt be a deceiver if theſe things be not ſo, rather then which in the leaſt to think I would ſay in good earneſt and upon deliberation, *all Men are Lyars*. With him my Soul is contented to embarque for the Land of Eternity upon this perſwaſion and confidence, God muſt be good and true, He hath made known his Will concerning us Men by him, that is the *true and Faithful Witneſs*, who hath done it accordingly. *God hath appointed a day in the which he will Judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all Men, in that he hath raiſed him from the Dead*, Acts 17. 31.

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By Christs Resurrection the Apostle spends a whole Chapter, 1 *Cor*, 15. To prove the necessity of ours. And in other places of Scripture are such convincing Arguments, which are able to beget in us a lively Faith as is equal to knowledge and demonstration in other matters, which we cannot so properly have of any thing that is unseen and future, as this Article of Faith is.

Now my days are swifter then a Post, they flee away, they see no good, Job. 9. 25. It is evident they do roul over our heads, we have no true and lasting Happiness, but what is in expectation of that to come; nothing we do signifies but which tends to that. We cannot well think that God (who made this lower part of the World for our use *hath put all things under our feet*, Psal. 8. 6.) Whose works are manifold, and in Wisdom hath made them all; Should make us to serve to no purpose, that we should not have also our proper end; and we have no end at all unless it is to glorifie our Maker. We have no work to do, unless it is that he hath revealed for us here to do; Is it to shine in Pomp, or wear fine Clothes? In all our Glory we are not arrayed as the Lilies of the Field. Is it to shew our care by provision before hand for Earthly things? The Ants and Bees do the same, only we are found more unreasonable, they lay up only for the Winter time, but we who know our selves Mortal, covet as if we were to abide here for ever. Is it meerly to sport and play? The *Leviathan* takes his Pastime in the deep. Is it only to keep company? There are some sorts of Birds and Beasts that continually flock and herd together, still this is not all. God made Man for himself, hath endued him with Powers which rise higher then any of these ends; To know and serve him here in order to more fully praise and enjoy him hereafter. He hath provided other kind of things for us then we now see or have; Every one that is not Brutish in his Imagination doth find in himself Expectations after that which this World cannot give; something that points out beyond the compass of the Earth, and the Deep saith, it is not in me. The good and allwise Creator will not couzen or beguile him with that which is not, will not always feed him with bare longings or false hopes. No doubt, but if Man will believe and have patience for a little while, he shall have his full satisfaction.

These things are superfluous to Mention, but there are many unbelievers in these latter days, who by sayings and careless actions cause the Faith of some to stumble; Others have taken up Christianity

ſtianity as a thing of courſe and outward cuſtom of the World, they know nothing more in it. I have heard it Talked and Whiſpered as if dead and gone, there is an end and no more. It was needful to ſay ſomewhat that theſe might in due time have perfect knowledge of another World before they are actually entred into it, for otherwiſe it is ſad and lamentable. And alſo that thoſe who have ſome belief, and not bare profeſſion, might be under a more lively ſence thereof, for this very much helps to ordering the converſation aright. Nay, who have all faith and come to the greateſt degree that uſually Men arrive unto, yet theſe have need ſtill to ſeek out further eſtabliſhment and confirmation thereof. God having reſerved that in Heaven, and it being not ſo agreeable to a ſtate of Tryal, is pleaſed not to give unto any of us abſolute perfection in Spiritual Graces or natural accompliſhments. Who hath received a faith which cannot be ſhaken, at leaſt in ſome of its Branches? It doth lie upon us all to make it as ſure as ever we can by the means given that it may help in time of need. When we come near to Death that is ſuch a time, the greateſt Temptation with which Satan doth at laſt aſſail us, is commonly to unbelief, taking advantage over bodily weakneſs and drooping. So that he who is wiſe will endeavour to lay up in ſtore againſt that time; and alſo it is neceſſary in the midſt of life, then indeed it may be accompanied with little doubts, but at laſt with deſperate plungings. It is requiſite to do all things to believe, yea, and ſtedfaſtly to believe.

No Man can be too well aſſured of the Truth of Scripture, and which is included in them a life to come: Let him endeavour ſtill to be more and more, for then he may ſecurely triumph over the laſt Enemy, Death, look it in the face and yet not be diſmayed: His buſineſs is, when he believes the Scriptures to be moſt certainly true, to act accordingly, and then he is ſafe: When he can apply thoſe promiſes to himſelf in Truth, and without deceit, he is as ſure as is poſſible for any to be on this ſide of Heaven. Saith Chriſt, *Whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine and doth them, I will liken him unto a wiſe Man which built his Houſe upon a Rock, and the rain deſcended, and the flood came, and the Winds blew and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock*, Mat. 7. 24, 25. This he applyed to his whole Sermon on the Mount; Who doth obſerve that, particularly what is ſaid, *Mat.* 5. 19, 20, 29, *Mat.* 7. 21. Shall have this commendation in the mean

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while, and ſhall at laſt find it to be true to his endleſs comfort.

But there is a deceit amongſt Chriſtians, who think if they can apply one ſingle Beatitude to themſelves, they are well enough. Indeed if they are ſo, not becauſe natural diſpoſition is more inclined to ſuch a Grace, but purely out of obedience to Chriſt and no other reaſon; the bleſſing may be theirs. And if they were ſo alone out of that Principle, the very ſame would oblige them to other things alſo. He that is careful to approve his Obedience ſincerely unto God, will do it in all things he requires, as well as ſuch a particular inſtance. If he is acted by love and ſubjection unto him, he will do a thing at his command contrary to natural inclination or fleſhly intereſt. In all the Law given us there is no exception left to the natural humours and deſires of Men, thoſe are to be contradicted and brought into Obedience. If ſome are more prone to this ſin, and again ſome to another kind, their forbearance and practice of the contrary duty will be more excellent and have a proportionable reward. All Gods Precepts are linked together, But as in the Gifts of God, a Man hath the common meaſure of all, yet one is more eminent for this: So in Obedience and Chriſtian Graces one is obliged to all, but then a ſingle one ſhall ſhine forth more then the reſt; and to ſuch beſides the common reward, a more eſpecial bleſſing is promiſed. Jam. 2. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 12. 8.

This is not a needleſs digreſſion, for the Doctrine and Practice of Univerſal Obedience is neceſſary againſt the Fear and Danger of Death, as we learn from *Ezek.* 18. 31. 1 *Cor.* 15. 56. That gives title to all the promiſes: who compl'ies therewith is ſure, and none beſides. *Righteouſneſs delivereth from Evil*, Prov. 11. 4. From the Fear whilſt he lives, and the Danger when it approaches nigh. The body will a little tremble at its diſſolution, for that is natural; *But Chriſt came to deliver them, who through Fear of Death were all their life time ſubject to bondage*, Heb. 2. 15. And this benefit he hath procured to his Servants, for they believe the Scriptures to be true which are fulfilled in them, ſo they are aſſured no evil can happen unto them after Death, and therefore are not tormented with the apprehenſions of it. They do not ſtifle or drive it out of mind, for there is much advantage from the Meditation thereof: It is a great help to right and good actions; What will this ſignifie and avail when I come to die? It quickens to do whatever his hand finds to do with all his might, for there is no Labour nor Work in the Grave. There is but one

of Tryal, the days paſs away, are accountable for, and do not return; this puts upon doing every thing to the utmoſt to have the favour and acceptance of Almighty God.

The World judging by themſelves look upon thoſe as Melancholy, who are ſo wiſe to conſider their latter end. But is there no difference between the Righteous and Wicked? There is much in their manner of Converſation all the life long, and ſo is at their death. There is difference in Priſoners between the innocent and guilty as to their looking for the day of Aſſizes, and ſhall the laſt Judge of the comfortable expectation of the other by his own Fears and Dread? Becauſe ſome are afraid to appear before Chriſt, are they alſo who have the certain promiſe of Being with him? The one doth not live like the other, they are contrary in their Thoughts, Words and Actions before, their manner of Diſſolution, that vaſt and endleſs parting they muſt make one from another. It is the greateſt Happineſs to the one, and miſery to the other, and therefore it may be well ſuppoſed to adminiſter different thoughts to them.

It is impoſſible to obviate all the ſayings of Men, for they are endleſs, and moſt are ſo trivial that they do not deſerve any anſwer, but yet may be judged of by this one Obſervation, *viz.* There is nothing ſo good and true, but ſomething may be ſaid againſt it; Nothing ſo evil and falſe, but ſomething may be ſaid for it. But in every propoſition, let it ſeem never ſo true or ſtrange at firſt ſight, examine the Arguments of both ſides without prejudice or partiality; and then that ſide which hath moſt reaſon and probability may determine our aſſent. This doth make for the honour and reality of Truth, that the reaſons whereby (inferring one thing from another) we come to know it, are clear, deep and convincing. Truth muſt prevail where it can be manifeſted; Which is of ſuch a Divine and excellent Nature that the whole doth not come forth on a ſudden, but hath been ſtrugling in the Womb ſome thouſands of Years. There is great oppoſition to it by the powers of Darkneſs and their Sophiſtry, as may be ſeen; for the Objections againſt it are Dark, Perplex, Contradictory, Slight and deceiving. It is reciprocally ſo with falſhood, though it hath paſſed current and been a long time received. This may be applied to innumerable inſtances.

But to our purpoſe, The noble Martyrs of Old, did not decline Death in its moſt terrible ſhape when they might glorifie God and avoid ſin: they were called Melancholly, Sullen, Obſtinate, Fooliſh, haters of Mankind and ſuch like. When they were in the very prime of Age, of excellent natural diſpoſition, of a vain converſation before and that changed by Chriſtianity into a more happy manner of living, when they were wiſe and underſtood what they did as well as ever Men did, and did ſhew themſelves as ſincere and affectionate to one another. The Devil is never wanting to ſet himſelf againſt the doings of God, to whiſper into the hearts of Men to hinder their Faith and returning unto him; but then they run away with that, and will not conſider what can be ſaid on the other ſide; this is one cauſe of unbelief, the many objections and prejudices they have againſt the truth. They are reſolved to take up therewith, and not hear from themſelves or others a full ſatisfactory anſwer; Is the leaſt thing muttered againſt God? Their ears are open immediately, it is forthwith unanſwerable; But if ſpoken out for him, then *like the deaf Adder they ſtop their Ears, and refuſe to hear the voice of the Charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely:* They think it can never be wiſe that makes for Religion, as all things are which make againſt it. Whilſt they are willing, Satan ſhould hold them at this catch, it may be here applied, *Becauſe they received not the love of the Truth that they might be ſaved, for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs,* 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12. They might conſider which was moſt ſafe, as well as moſt reaſonable to believe: In the likelieſt probability when ſuch multitudes of Men, Women (more fearful by nature) and young Men, who may ruſh upon Death in a heat of paſſion, or out of Gallantry and Honour, not with a deliberate adviſed mind, When it was eſteemed infamous and fooliſh by the World, yet ſtill to embrace it rather then ſin againſt God and deny the Faith, this muſt be the power of his Grace which did arm their mind againſt all Fear of Death, both in its natural dreadfulneſs, and alſo heigthened by the malice and cruelty of Men.

That was an extraordinary Caſe, but what is it to the Fear of Death now a days?

Very much, for though Men do not continue in the World by reason of Death, yet that still continues. It reigned as an evil from *Adam* unto Christ: But now he hath taken away the sting and frightful nature from it. When he made his Soul an offering for sin, and took upon him the person of the Wicked he drunk of the Cup of Gods Wrath; Was there any such love *that he by the Grace of God should taste Death for every Man?* Heb. 2. 9. Taking away that exceeding bitterness in it, for all those who will comply with the ends of his death; Who can withstand such goodness? The full Cup was taken off, it matters not if a drop or two is left behind, that we may not relish how exceeding bitter it was to him. *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the World*, John 1. 29. *Even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come*, 1 Thes. 1. 10.

Saith *David* of Old, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil*, Psal. 23. 4. he speaks a little doubtfully, as may be observed by the Particle, *Yea, though*, He is apt to believe he should not, he hopes so: As one to whom Immortality, Resurrection and Eternal Life was not clearly revealed, see *Psal.* 6. 5. *Psal.* 88. 10. *Isa.* 38 18. They lived under that dispensation which gendred Bondage; but now we know what is written, *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. *Rev* 14. 13. It is said *from henceforth*, which hath been accordingly fulfilled: Immediately after Christ had suffered, how did the Saints grapple with Death? Notwithstanding that fury and rage of his Enemies, we find not *Stephen* in the least surprized, nothing that betrayed any Fear. He prays for his Murderers, *and when he had said this, he fell asleep*, Acts 7. 60. Observe the phrase of the Holy Ghost, it was no more trouble or concern to him, then an ordinary taking rest by night. *Paul* triumphs over it in behalf of all Christians, 1 *Cor.* 15. 54, 55, 56. 2 *Cor.* 5. 4, 8. and for himself declares, *Phil.* 1. 21, 22. *Tertullian* describing the Happiness of Christians in his time, after he had reckoned up many parts thereof, brings up as the most considerable of all, That they have no Fear of Death. He speaks generally of all, not limiting it only to the Martyrs, though indeed it did appear more in them. Our Fathers have told us what great things God did in this Nation, in those who suffered for his Truth and the Testimony of a good Conscience in the time of Queen *Mary*. The Promise is certain and applicable to all, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble,*

Heb. 12. 27.

Tert. de spect.

trouble, Pſal. 46. 1. Amongſt all the Extremities which befal poor Mortals, that ſeems the ſharpeſt which denominates them ſuch. The laſt Enemy is Death, and all other Evils are the more feared, becauſe they may bring on that. So we may be bold to ſay, God is obliged by Promiſe to ſuccour his Servants at that time, and may humbly intreat him to make good his Word, which he doth accordingly, The continuance of his Spirit that it hath been, now is, and ever ſhall be, is plainly aſſerted, *Hag.* 2. 5. *Iſa* 59. 21. *John* 14. 16. Whatever is requiſite now adays to *turn the Hearts of the Fathers unto the Children, and the diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the Juſt, to make ready a People prepared for the Lord*, Luke 1. 17. there is the ſame Reaſon it ſhould, and it doth ſtill abide among us, as our Fore-fathers. God will have a Church in the World to the end of time, ſo all along his Promiſes do extend, and he doth provide things Convenient for the building up, Stabliſhment, and Comfort thereof. The Spirit is called *the Comforter*, not that he doth deliver from Evils, but ſupport under them. And it cannot be thought, whoſe buſineſs is to this very end, that this ſhould not aſſiſt in the laſt of all. In the time of common Sickneſs and Death, many good People go out of the World at this day with Peace, and as it were rejoycing. Nay, when the Horror of Death approacheth, we may ſee the ſhew of a Smile in their Countenance, how they do inſult over this Enemy, for do its worſt it can do them no harm. It is not thus always, for ſeveral things may ſtop the exerting forth of this Chearfulneſs, yet what the Apoſtle ſaith is Peremptory and true, *If any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, Rom. 8. 9. And that will yield ſome Comfort, it doth ſhine in the Heart, though it may be darkned and over clouded: I would in no wiſe diſcourage any one, who hath ſincerity and the true Fear of God, who are willing to pleaſe him in all things, though their beginnings may be imperfect, *For who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things?* Zech. 4. 10. and yet are taken away, God will Judge according to the real Intentions, for this is accepted if it would indeed come forth into Act, as may be learned by comparing *Heb.* 11 17. with *Gen.* 22. 10, 12. And ſo if they ſhould not live to perfect the good Work: He who knows the very ſecrets of the Heart, accepts of the Will for the Deed, and will deal with them as he knows their Obedience would be if they ſhould live longer; theſe may be in doubt and uncertainty, yet go off

ſafely,

ſafely. But there is a vaſt number of Hypocrites and *almoſt Chriſtians*, who hinder from diſcerning the Truth, for it is more judged of by theſe Examples, then the written Word of God. Whereas they do confirm it the more. There is a difference between ſeeming and reality, thoſe who make goodly appearances may be full of Rottenneſs within, and again thoſe who boaſt they keep all the Commandments, may yet want one thing which is neceſſary to give them Title to Heaven. They live in ſome reſerved Sin not diſcovered to the World, or Omiſſion of Duty which makes them horribly afraid. There is a way ſhewed, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled in Mens Perſons. Let them do what is therein required, and the Promiſe of good things doth belong unto them: None can with juſt reaſon conceive the leaſt unfaithfulneſs in God, or Falſhood in his Word, if himſelf doth not wholly conform to it. Whether Men will or not, that remains the ſame: *The Scripture cannot be broken*, John 10. 35. If it is not fulfilled by their obedience unto Happineſs, it will be notwithſtanding in their wickedneſs, by acquainting them what they ſhall experimentally find, *Deſtruction and Miſery are in their ways, and the way of Peace they have not known*, Rom. 3 16, 17. As the Salvation of the righteous and Condemnation of the wicked will at laſt tend to Gods Glory; ſo even at this preſent time, they do ſet forth and manifeſt his Truth. If one finds no Comfort or benefit by the Word, it is a ſad Sign that it is taken from him, and he is yet in his Sins. It is becauſe he doth not *order his Steps in Gods Word, but ſome iniquity hath Dominion over him*, Pſal. 119. 133. for we muſt Sincerely endeavonr the things we pray for.

Mark the perfect Man, and behold the upright, for the end of that Man is Peace, Pſal. 37. 37. Not Stupidity or Senſeleſsneſs, for he that hath truly ſerved God in his Life-time doth not go away after that manner, *God doth not caſt him off in the time of Age, nor forſake him when his ſtrength faileth*, Pſal. 71. 9. So neither will he be unmindful of his God at that time. He can pray fervently, hear and think of him with the greateſt quietneſs and Confort. Concerning his Soul he hath well grounded hope and aſſurance. But there will be a little aukwardneſs in parting; The Spirit is willing, the Fleſh is weak: This will ſhrink to be diſſolved, and when being united to the Soul, it conſiders of ſeeing Corruption, to be covered with Dirt, and lye mouldring there,

there, here is a little trembling and unpleasantness. But give me leave to put you in mind (and this is for the Comfort of good and bad, their Body being the same) not to be troubled about this thing; for there is no such dreadfulness in it as we imagine. The Soul only is the Man, and the Body is but a Lump of Clay; when that is gone out, the other is no more to us, then now any common piece of Earth or Stone. One that hath a Leg or Arm cut off is not much concerned, what becomes of that, if a Beast devour it, or burnt with Fire, or is buried under ground, he indeed misses the use thereof, but feels not whatever Alterations it run through. It is the same as drops of Blood or Spittle fallen to the Earth, he minds it not. Our own Corps will be no more to us when dead, then that of another to us whilst living. The Soul makes the difference, for though there be several sorts of Complexion, Stature and such other Accidents, yet there is no more between Bodies, then of one piece of Clay from another: *I must shortly put off this Tabernacle*, 2 Pet. 1. 14. so 2 Cor. 5. 1. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. It is Leaving of an House for a time, which we do not mind longer then we are in, let it fall or sink, afterwards we shall not feel that. The Soul is carried into *Abrahams* Bosom, *Luke* 16. 22. and is not concerned for the *Mantle that fell from her*, for it shall be put on again, and made Glorious according to *Phil.* 3. 21. 2 Kings 2. 13.

But here Faith may begin to fail, If the Soul be immortal, of such transcendent Excellency, and distinct substance from the Body; How comes it to pass, that she Sickens, Droops, and seems to dye with the Body: Nay, our dissolution doth seem as a loosening of the Contexture of parts, when the Spirits of Life shall cease, and are turned out of Order: The Wheels are spoyled or taken away, and so the Motion is stopped: In the Death of every one there is some natural and visible Cause, so it is doubtful, whether there is such great Matter in it, as we are told of.

I desire the Reader in this and other places, not to conclude any thing unanswerable, because here he doth not see a clear Answer unto it; for if I cannot, another may, and if he should not, still it is unjust, that the Truth of Divine Revelation, should stand or fall by the weakness of a Man. Faith relies upon that, and not upon Humane reasoning; however this may seem to make more probable the things we believe, yet they cannot be made

made ſo very certain, as to take off all manner of doubt: There is ſomething left to exerciſe the Faith of Gods Servants, for if it was evident with open Face and paſt Queſtion, *What reward hath it*? Immortality is plainly declared in the Scriptures, whereon the Promiſes of the Goſpel are founded. We have the Teſtimony of God and his Son Jeſus Chriſt for it, and it is the Excellency of our Faith to cleave unto that, notwithſtanding all the objections of Fleſh and Blood to the contrary. *I know whom I have believed*, and he that made me at firſt out of nothing can raiſe me again out of Duſt and Aſhes; he that breathed into me the breath of Life can preſerve it when it is gone forth; it is eaſie for the Spirit to return to him that gave it. God works in a natural and ordinary way, as he firſt endued the Body with Life and Motion, faſhioning and uniting all its Parts, ſo he qualifies it for ſuch a long continuance. With the greateſt Humility and Reverence, by judging according to what is revealed, and that Reaſon himſelf hath been pleaſed to give, I conceive, That as in common Works the Artificer doth frame a Motion to laſt ſo long, It may be ſuppoſed, the Maker of all things doth the ſame as Man doth, to whom he hath given that knowledge. After the Springs and Wheels are ſet a going, it will move for the determinate time of it ſelf, and will not ceaſe unleſs by the hindrance of ſome Accident. *In God we live, and move, and have our being*, Acts 17.28. It was he alone that gave all this to us, and even now holds our Souls in Life. At laſt he doth take away our breath and we die, yet he doth it always by ſome natural Cauſe. He might do it by meer Subſtraction of our Breath, but when he is pleaſed to bring any to an untimely end; he either ſends Plague, Sickneſs, Sword, Famine, or ſuffers to fall under ſuch a Caſualty as are many Examples in Scripture. Men cry out ſtill upon ſecond Cauſes, but yet they might look up unto him, who holds the firſt link in his hand of this great Chain of Things, who ſaith to this Diſeaſe, Go and cut down ſuch a Man, or elſe ſhake him. Who hath the diſpoſal and ordering of every Accident, who can withdraw his Protection, and let ſuch an Evil deſtroy us. *Seeing his days are determined, the number of his Months is with thee, thou haſt appointed his bounds which he cannot paſs*, Job 14. 5. Even Reaſon it ſelf doth manifeſt thus much, for a Candle always burning, if it be not blown out or waſted ſooner will laſt but ſuch a time. The Vital Spirits continue only ſo long, if

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no Accident or Diſtemper come between. And therefore the rule is certain, none goes beyond, but many come ſhort of their appointed time; to prevent which every one is in Duty bound to uſe means and all good Care. Life conſiſts in the Union of the Soul and Body, they are ſo near and interwoven, that whatſoever happens to the one, the other hath a touch and feeling thereof. So it is in time of Health, much more in Sickneſs; the one is ſenſible of the Pain and Languiſhing of the other. But it can be in no wiſe concluded, that becauſe ſhe Sympathiſes, therefore ſhe doth die with the Body. The Spirit is the Light of the Body, it may waft up and down a little before its Separation, but is not to be ſeen. *Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward?* Eccleſ. 3. 21. And where the Wiſe Man ſaith, Ver. 19. *That which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth Beaſts, even one thing befalleth them, as one dieth, ſo dieth the other:* He ſpeaks according to common appearance, as one that lived under the Old Teſtament which doth not ſo clearly manifeſt immortality as the Goſpel doth, *Luke* 16. 22, 23. *Luke* 23. 43. *Phil.* 1. 21, 23. *Heb.* 9. 27. *Rev.* 6. 9. Beſides are innumerable places to prove Reſurrection, eternal Judgment, and Life everlaſting. Things are fixed, and not according to Mens Fancies one way or another; thoſe Decrees and Ordinances remain ſtill the ſame in Heaven. Of which we could know no more, unleſs they had been told unto us by the Son of God, who came down from Heaven, and the Spirit from above, then one now lying in the loweſt Dungeon doth know of what is done in this World. And they do not vary, change or alter with our ſeveral apprehenſions of them, whether of aſſurance or doubt, no more then the Sun ceaſes from ſhining, when only a Cloud comes between. Let the ſick Perſon uſe continual Ejaculations, *Lord increaſe my Faith*, And God will not leave him, *But he ſhall receive the end of his Faith, the Salvation of his Soul.* Pſal. 55. 23.

There cannot be too much Strength or Comfort laid up againſt this Day: it ſhould be the buſineſs of a Chriſtians whole Life before, for it is the entrance into an endleſs Life. It is the fulfilling and Manifeſtation of whatever he hath heard, Read or done in Truth pertaining to God and Religion. And indeed it is worth while to do all things to go off ſafely. He will have Peace in his Life, and ſtrong Conſolation in his Death. Let him obſerve all parts of Duty to God, his Neighbour and himſelf

throughout the Courſe of his Days. Let him do what he can in Sincerity and Truth: Whoſo doth theſe things ſhall never be moved. *He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches: He that overcometh ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond Death.* Rev. 2. 11. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good Work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt,* Phil. 1. 6. We may be certain of uſing the means of perſeverance, for God hath put them into our Power, and as long as we rightly uſe thoſe means we ſhall infallibly perſevere. So that in the mean while we may be aſſured, and at laſt have true and certain hopes of Reſurrection unto eternal Life. And there cannot be ſuch Fright and Amazement concerning that which is to make the everlaſting Deciſion, either when it is far off, or near at hand. If any one hath, let him ſearch and examine his Conſcience impartially; either he doth ſomething which he ought not to do, or he leaves ſomething undone which he ought to do, this makes him horribly afraid, and muſt be amended before he can be freed from the Danger, which the Fear gives warning of.

A true Chriſtian can contentedly look for the bleſſed Hope, even in the midſt of Life he can find Comfort and ſweet in the thoughts of Death, as that which will free from the diſturbances of Fleſh and Blood, the Moleſtations of an unthankful, unbelieving, ignorant World, from the Miſeries and Labours of Life, and ſend him over unto eternal Reſt and Rejoycing. To come to the Enjoyment of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to be admitted into Fellowſhip with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, all the Good and Wiſe Men ſince the World began, to be gathered unto his Fathers, to ſee his Godly Friends and Acquaintance of the ſame Generation with himſelf juſt gone before, all this muſt be a deſirable thing. The dead may be ſuppoſed to be about five hundred to one more then the living now are, thoſe whom thou leaveſt behind ſhall in a little time follow thee, and the People which ſhall be born ſhall die in like manner, and ſhortly God will accompliſh his whole Elect. None hath advantage, who goes before or after. And ſeeing the River muſt be gone over, it is ſmall difference who hath a longer or ſhorter Paſſage, ſo we avoid the Rocks and Dangers in the way. The pious Soul will be in a Strait willing to ſtay, and yet have a mind to go; and there is ſome Irkſomeneſs to leave the World, as now it is to change the place where we have long dwelt: Our Nature is ſomething made

up

up of Contraries, willing and yet unwilling; but if God doth really ſend as we know not his Pleaſure until after the uſe of all prudent Remedies the Sickneſs proves unto Death, Fear not to go, for he calls thee. Remember that Petition thou haſt often made, *Thy Kingdom come*, and when it is, wilt thou then ſhrink back? One end of Sickneſs is to make us the more willing to leave the World. Whatever is ſudden, doth ſurprize for the time, but then it is ſoon over, whereas that which comes on by Degrees and expected, is longer, but then more eaſily born. Good Men have been divided in Opinion about this thing; thoſe who have been for a ſudden departure, have rightly thought, the only Preparation is by an holy Life, for the Goſpel ſpeaks of no other. It Commands to Watch, to have our Loyns girt, and our Lamps burning, and this is to be done in the midſt of Health, Life and Vigour. There is much Talk in the World about providing for ones latter End, but unleſs to ſettle temporal Affairs from the example of *Hezekiah* there is not ſo much ſaid thereof throughout the whole Word of God. It is the beginning of Error and Deceit, when People depart from that. It is Non ſenſe and Contradiction to the ſaying of our Saviour, *John.* 9. 4. to put off the working while *it is day, till the night cometh when no Man can Work.* Who purpoſely put off the working out their Salvation till that time, had beſt have a great Care what they do, for beſides the hazard of being taken away by ſudden Death, yet if they ſhould have conſiderable time of Sickneſs, or Old decrepit Age; they have no ſuch Warrant of being accepted. Hear what God ſaith, *Mal.* 1. 8. of offering *the Blind, the Lame, the Sick for Sacrifice.*

But if ſome are againſt Death by the ordinary way of Sickneſs, becauſe that is tireſome, and may be an occaſion of murmuring Diſtruſt, Unbelief, blaſphemous Speeches, which proceed from violent Diſtempers, yet we ſhould not refuſe to ſuffer whatever God thinks fit to lay upon us. He knows our Condition, and will not enter into Judgment for the meer Sin of the Diſeaſe, no more then he imputes the Follies of Childhood. *We are to receive for the things done in the Body*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. to be judged according to the general Tenour and Bent of our Life. Neither will our moſt merciful God take advantage of any infirmity or ſlip at the laſt. He will not ſuffer us for any Pains of Death to fall from him. The Church prays ſo for more abundant ſecurity, and alſo to deliver

from sudden Death; O Lord thou knoweſt what is beſt for every one of us, *Thy Will be done.* Whether this firſt coming of the Son of Man finds in the Field, or in the Streets, in the lower parts of our Houſe, or our Cloſet, or upon a Sick-bed we may go hence ſecurely; though upon the laſt we may glorifie God, ſhew our Faith and Sincerity, Comfort and exhort Bye-ſtanders, manifeſt to this unbelieving Generation the truth and reality of Religion, that it can free from the Fear of what hath been called the moſt terrible of Terribles.

The Sayings of Philoſophers and Wiſe Heathens will make a fine jingling and noiſe, they will ſound magnificently or delight ſomewhat whilſt Reading; but even then it may be obſerved, they do not afford ſufficient Strength and Comfort againſt it; but when it approaches nigh, none at all. Men may a little pleaſe themſelves with a Sentence or two whilſt they live, but ſtill it may be otherwiſe, it doth not ſatisfie; but when they come to die, all thoſe brave Words vaniſh and ſignifie nothing. Nay, all the Diſcourſes of meer Reaſon will not avail as to this thing, for let there be never ſo much ingenuity or ſhew of arguing, yet there is a Poſſibility of miſtake, and they can never reach to any aſſurance. To Examine that admired Saying of *Seneca*, Death is either an end or a paſſage; if the firſt, never Fear to ceaſe to be, for it is the ſame as not to have begun; neither to paſs, becauſe I ſhall never be ſo narrowly confined, *Sen. Ep* 65. As for the firſt if it is ſo, he argues rightly, but not all the Wiſe Men of paſt Ages or the preſent, can give certainty that it is ſo; Neither their ſtudy and ſearching, nor the ingenuity of ſome or Careleſsneſs of others at this day can throughly ſatifie the mind of any conſidering Man. And ſo they could not ſecure the World from Danger, for let them ſay and do what they will it may be otherwiſe, which is as ſure as the Scriptures are true: But then it muſt be a paſſage according to the other ſuppoſal: From that he Reaſons weakly and deceitfully, for it would be a poor relief, to be out of the Priſon of the Body, and in more Miſery. In that it is dreadful; becauſe it conſigns over to a State of Happineſs or Miſery. What will the Diſputer and Wiſe Man of the World ſay to this? What help can the Philoſophers find out againſt it? And let them tell what the Lord of hoſts hath purpoſed upon all the Generations of mankind. It is no more in our Power and Wiſdom to hinder Puniſhment after Death, then it was to hinder our own Being. That

God

God who took us out of our Mothers Womb, if we are not reconciled unto him in the mean while, will raiſe us up again to ſuffer worſe things then we have done here. The ſence of this being [illegible] is ſufficient to make us afraid, and not without cauſe.

Saith one, It is beſt not to be born, or to die very quickly. But ſeeing we are born, how can he aſſure us of that? To have but one Tryal for endleſs Happineſs or Miſery, when all that can be done is little enough to make ſure a thing of that importance as laying hold of the good and avoiding the evil; this is not to be done haſtily and well. If he means to die quickly becauſe we ſhall be as nothing, Produce his ſtrong reaſons and all will not amount to a Certainty, no nor a Probability. The Spirit of God ſaith contrary, *It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after this the Judgment*, Heb. 9. 27. He that made them and ſent them into this World, knows beſt what ſhall become of them when they are gone out, and of him we have this Revelation.

Let the Wiſe and Prudent go away with their fine expreſſions, let Infidels and Fools go on in their Denial and Negligence: the Word of God abideth ſure, that will diſcover all their Errors and Miſtakes. A day of determination draweth nigh upon the living, as it hath already paſſed upon many Generations: If they were ſuffered to come from the Dead and teſtifie of theſe things, we ſhould have a vaſt cloud of Witneſſes. God is not pleaſed to permit this, and therefore doubts firſt, and then unbelief do ſpring up in the hearts of Men; Neither do any go there whilſt living, and return. There is no intercourſe betwixt the two Worlds; Things then would be ſo certain and paſt doubt, that none would ſerve God for nought, for the alone hope and expectation of unſeen things. But people would traffick for Heaven as they do to *Jamaica* or the *Indies*, and all ſtill for love of themſelves, not out of any love to the Lord of that Country. What a company of Mercenary Souls ſhould we have? Then the Church would be flocked unto, even upon Weeks days as the *Exchange*. Then Worldly minded Men would become the beſt Chriſtians, thoſe who are all for themſelves, uſe Religion only now to ſerve a turn or for a reſerve; but if there was ſuch ſenſible profit, ſuch would do moſt therein, and ſtill do nothing only for Gods ſake. There would be no *work of Faith* or *labour of Love*, but all ſelfiſhneſs; God hath moſt wiſely ordered

ordered it as it is, that the Trial of Faith might be had, that the excellency of Obedience may be seen. *We must needs die, and are as Water spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up again*, 2 Sam. 14. 14. It appears so in our sight, but the eye of Faith can reach further to an Immortality and Resurrection. Again, *all things happen alike to all*, there is no visible and eminent reward to Righteousness or Iniquity, this will manifest of what sort our Obedience is. If we can deny present ease and pleasure, submitting our selves to loss and inconvenience for that which no Man hath seen, this is such love and trust in God to which he hath promised a recompence of Reward. If we believe his Word speaking of Futurity, though we see nothing in a dead Man to give Warrant or Ground for it, there is some commendation in this Faith; that the Soul which seems nothing but Breath vanished and gone, doth yet live: That such a clod of Flesh which must first turn into Stench, then common undistinguishable Dust, that the Bones shall be disjoynted, and themselves though somewhat longer become Dust also, that these shall become *Bones again* and there shall be Resurrection as described, *Ezek.* 37. *There shall be a shaking and the Bones come together, Bone to Bone, Sinews and the Flesh came upon them, and the Skin covered them*, which shall be performed in a literal sence at the last day, and as they were dissolved so to be raised again, though it will be done more suddenly: This is something above what is common to believe. As Christians, we judge him faithful that hath promised. As reasonable Men we can thus deem that he who made the World and our selves of nothing, can also restore out of pre-existent matter.

Acts. 1. 11.

We have also a more sure word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn, and the day Star arise in your hearts, 2 Pet. 1. 19. The meerest unbeliever and natural Man may look upon the Scriptures which testifie to the contrary, and give a lustre to his dark mind; it may be otherwise then he is apt to wish or fancy. But would he come to be more intimately acquainted with them, and once begin to direct his Actions accordingly, he would have that inward Assurance and Satisfaction, that his former ignorance and unbelief would vanish away. Whosoever applyeth to that Holy Book with candour and ingenuity, to search whether these things are so, if he comes with an upright sincere mind to be informed, *God*

will

will reveal it more perfectly to him; Grace doth accompany the appointed means, He that thus reads, ſhall both underſtand and believe. He cannot meet with ſo much aſſurance in all the Books of the Learned, in all humane Reaſoning, in all the Tricks and Devices the wit of Man can find out, as in that one expreſſion of our Lord and Saviour. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting Life, and ſhall not come into Condemnation, but is paſſed from Death unto Life*, Joh. 5. 24. The only danger that threatens Mankind after this life, is from a greater Power, and here we have aſſurance from the greateſt that is or can be, from God himſelf and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, that to do thus is the Way to get his Favour and avoid his Indignation. We have as much aſſurance from his Goodneſs and Truth, as if we were placed above all hurt or injury: He commandeth all the powers of Darkneſs, hath in ſubjection every thing that can be Named, ſo that they cannot poſſibly hurt without his Allowance, and he will never ſuffer any of his Servants to be in the leaſt Tormented by them. In this life God ſpares Sinners and chaſtiſes the Righteous; but in the next he will ſpare them and condemn the others. He will not forget the inſulting of his Enemies, or the contempt and low eſtate of his own peculiar People. Shall the wicked Blaſpheme God for ever, and vex his Servants? No it cannot be: Whilſt they are in the way they may be exerciſed with Storms, Tempeſts, Troubles, but not when they are at the end. *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea ſaith the Spirit*, Rev. 14. 13. We have his Teſtimony for it, and what is wonderful to agree therewith, the conſent of the whole World both good and bad. The wicked will confeſs the ſame, however they vary from them in courſe of life, they account the Godly more happy in their end. In the time of Health and Jollity they may put off Holy things with a contemptuous ſmile, look with an Eye of ſcorn and diſdain upon the Religious Fools, but when themſelves come upon the bed of Sickneſs, then Horrour and Vexation ſucceed for former Laughter. When *the ſhadow of Death ſits upon their eyelids*, then they look otherwiſe: The Scales of Luſt and prejudice fall off from the heart of the Sinner juſt before opening into the other World, then he is changed in Opinion and hath other kind of Thoughts. What would himſelf give if he had been ſuch a fool whom now he knows to be the only prudent Men? Wiſhes are

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vain and to no purpose, that miserable saying, I did not think of this before, doth no good to the person himself, but serves to warn others that they be not such fools, and even he might have known as much before. When Wisdom is not only *justified of her Children*, but approved of by the disobedient; what they utter against it is nothing but the effect of Folly and Madness, but when they come to their right Wits and Sobriety, they turn and pronounce of her Side. When Malice and Envy are forced to speak Truth, Stubbornness is overcome, but above all lust the great blinder of the mind begins to vanish away, and it apprehends all things in their true shape. Every thing besides is cryed out for Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, and this judged the only real and substantial good, all the rest have been deceivers, and this alone true. The pleasures and conveniencies of sin did not afford Peace and Happiness whilst had, and yet are fled away as if they had not been. Now it is fully discerned what was best to have done, and what is the only thing to be trusted unto. It is certain there is no profit in Wickedness, for it stands in no stead; and again, there is a certain fearful expectation of the end of those things; which is Death. If they own not as much in Word or Action, yet they are forced to it in serious thought and inward apprehension: there is the real assent of every kind of Men, *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely*, Prov. 10. 9. We all make haste towards the finishing of our course, and there is no way to be safe and blessed in ones Death, but by an Obedient and Christian Life.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of Religion, Faith, Repentance, Obedience, againſt Ungodlineſs: Of Preaching, Prayer, Praiſe, the Sacrament. That Religion doth not conſiſt only in the outward Ordinances, but a Divine inward Frame and Diſpoſition, which if univerſally complyed withall, will give Peace and Reſt to the Soul.

WIthout *Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him: for he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him,* Heb. 11. 6. A firm belief is ſufficient that he is greater then we can conceive or imagine; Whilſt we are abſent from Him in the Body, it is not poſſible to ſee or know him as he is known. This puzling thought often recurs, What is he in whom thou believeſt? God is a Spirit, infinite, Eternal: And we that are fleſh, limited and our Age is as nothing, cannot have a full apprehenſion of him. We eaſily judge thus much, that he muſt be greater then we can know; Shall the Mole deny there is any ſuch thing as Man, becauſe under ground he doth not ſee him? And we are altogether as unable with theſe eyes of ſence to ſee him that is Spiritual and Inviſible. Shall even brute Beaſts who look upon us, conclude we have no Reaſon, Society or Government, becauſe they do not underſtand the manner of it? It would be alike impious and abſurd to disbelieve the manifold Wiſdom and Works of

God, becauſe we do not know them all, or any perfectly. God is ten thouſand times ten thouſand greater then Man, more then he doth exceed the Creatures under him: A more full diſcovery is reſerved in Heaven, *for now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then face to face*, 1 Cor, 13. 12. He hath been pleaſed to diſcover himſelf in the Works of Creation, Providence, and Holy Scripture. We plainly perceive by the things made that he is; and he hath alſo given us ſo much power that we may do the things he doth require of us; they are made known in Scripture, which is *given by inſpiration of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 16. We are to believe him to be true, and then all muſt be ſo which is contained in that Book.

God doth encourage to his ſervice with a Reward; ſo that he who labours to pleaſe him acts after the very ſame manner tho in a much more eminent and greater degree, as another who ſtudies to recommend himſelf to the favour of the King or any Superiour. The utmoſt viſible greatneſs is Low, and but a ſhadow of Majeſty in compariſon of this *High and Lofty One*, dark as to his Brightneſs, and ſoon paſſeth away, when *He inhabiteth Eternity*. However, Religion (which is our whole Duty towards God) is looked upon as a little contemptible thing, laughed at by the Ignorant Scornful and Proud Men, yet is as much greater then any Temporal Deſign or Buſineſs as God is greater then Man, Heaven then Earth, Eternity beyond time, a moſt perfect and everlaſting Happineſs above the fading imperfect trivial conveniencies here. We may as well truſt God for the great things to come, and labour after them, as we do for our daily Food and thoſe little things that are preſent. And though he now gives common Mercies to the unthankful, yet they muſt uſe ſome means after them; but for the better hope, the exceeding great and precious promiſes of unſeen and future things, thoſe are only for them who glorifie him here, and ſeek after them. Faith makes theſe things as abſolutely true and certain as thoſe now before us; *Whoſoever believeth on him ſhall not be aſhamed*, Rom. 10. 11. *Faith towards God* is reckoned among *the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt* Heb. 6. It being that upon which not only thoſe there recited, but whatſoever is ſaid throughout the whole Book of God doth depend; Which whoſoever believeth ſtedfaſtly muſt neceſſarily be a Chriſtian, not in Name and Profeſſion, but in manner of Life; or otherwiſe he will act more unreaſonably and fooliſhly

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then ever any one yet did as to the things of this World.

The Scripture doth contain things to be believed, and things to be done: The first are comprized in a brief form of sound Words, commonly called the *Apostles Creed*, which is believed as it stands upon certain and evident places of Scripture, and the outward confession of them is necessary to Salvation, according to what may be gathered from *John* 5. 24. *Rom.* 10. 9. *Mat.* 16. 16. *John* 3. 15, 16, 17, 18, 36. *Luke* 6. 47. The great danger in not believing any Scripture is what the Apostle Speaks, *He that believeth not God, hath made him a Lyar*, 1 John 5. 10. Which is more provoking then living in known Sin and Wickedness. But this none that believes other things will dare to do; the General Question and debate is what God intended in such a place. It is agreed on both sides of the Truth of some sence and meaning, but what that is, is the rise of controversie and dispute. *In* Paul's *Epistles are things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures unto their own destruction*, 2 Pet. 3. 16. But since we have had those who were learned and resolute in their way, who have done the same to carry on an interest, to maintain the grandeur and infallibility of such a Church, to espouse and propagate all the errours of such and such parties. There hath been horrible perverting and seeking out Evasions; not to the establishment but overthrow of the Truth. The pure and true Word of God hath been made use of to defend corruptions and maintain errour; abundance of this kind of iniquity will be disclosed at the revelation of all things.

It is sad to reflect that the only thing necessary in Religion is the only thing neglected, how people fly about the skirts and borders, not coming into the substance thereof. The Church is pulled asunder into this or that parcel of Christians; every little difference in Opinion must forthwith make a distinct party, they cursing and damning one another. It is the greatest part of the Christianity of some to be exclaiming against such a Sect or Communion; so that if our merciful God should proceed according to the *Anathemas*, Excommunications, Wishes and Imprecations of one against another, No flesh would be saved: What is the cause of all this stir and madness? *The Wisdom from above is first Pure, then Peaceable, Gentle and Easie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality and without Hypocrisie,*

Jam. 3. 17. The Gospel is good and plain, made up of simplicity and purity, so that is not the occasion thereof. But an enemy hath sown these tares of division, who works mightily in the hearts of Men to deceive, and hath taken this course to hinder the good seed, to stifle those practical truths which would bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. Men rightly think they must have something to do with the things of God, and some falsly think these vain disputations will serve the turn. These are speculative not falling upon lust, and they hope a zeal for this one way or another (it is something for God) and therefore shall come in for atonement of other sins; And in conclusion tends to that, he fain would save himself by condemning others. What else makes him so extraordinary zealous for such a way and against such an opinion, when himself in the mean while lives in Habitual sin and unrighteousness, which is more dangerous to Souls then errours of the understanding, if they were really such? Here some drive on an interest of their own, but who do not, are led by such an impulsive cause. In those that have set up for Guides and Teachers there hath been, *Doting about Questions and Strifes of words, whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Railing, evil Surmisings, perverse disputings of Men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth, supposing that gain is Godliness*, 1 Tim. 6. 4, 5. This was their end, but the silly people were by them told that was most for Salvation, which made for their own profit, and thus they have came to that height of zeal and giddiness. Do they not place more in their petty differences then in the weightier matters of Law? *Judgment, Mercy and love of one another:* That all this is a meer delusion may be further seen, because it quite vanishes when the Man approaches near to Death, and apprehends things according to sincerity and Truth.

How earnestly doth the Apostle express himself against these disputes even at their first beginning, *Rom.* 14. 1. *Phil.* 2. 14. 1 *Tim.* 1.6,7, & 6.20,21. 2 *Tim.* 2. 14,23. But what would he say if he had lived at this day to see so many volumes of controversie, to have heard of so *many go about as have troubled Christians with words subverting their Souls*, Acts 15. 24. Shattering, if not making to fall the foundation of Faith and good manners; How Religion is as it were turned into an endless prate and talk about controverted points. They have unsetled well disposed minds, by taking them off from the Doctrine according to Godliness: They have turned

turned out of the way of Truth into Errors and Deceits. The Infidels, Scorners, Carnal and indifferent Persons have been confirmed in their ungodliness, thinking it as good to be of no Religion at all, as to profess one with so much wrangling. They make sport with the Absurdities, and fallings out of the Religious. Also the Hypocrites and Adversaries under the shelter of them, do throw out their Reproaches; and hereupon the Presumption of them which hate God, increaseth yet more. Whereas it might be considered, that notwithstanding they differ and squabble, yet they all agree in this, That Obedience and Holiness is the only way to Heaven. If they contend about Circumstantial and positive Duties, it is about the manner; In this they concenter, that God is to be Worshipped: And they all stand up with one accord for the Moral part, the immutable Laws of Good and Evil.

There hath been an expedient proposed, and only wants to be put in use; if what some would Arrogantly have in their Church, be it no wise granted to them, but (what is most reasonable and due) that there should be an implicit Belief in Scripture, the Word of God. In all plain places believe them as they are, but in the hard and difficult so believe in general, whatever the Holy Spirit did intend was the very meaning of that place. Whosoever believes thus much, shall certainly be saved. Nor doth this shut out knowledge and industry, for that is a necessary Duty, but after that used to rest in what we apprehend the meaning, and that if any other is, so we believe it, See 1 *Cor.* 2.10,11. *Phil.*3.15. *Psal.*25.12,13,14. The way to Truth is by good Life, and direction from above. God is Gracious and Merciful, he threatens none but only those who shall not believe on him, and his Son Jesus Christ. All Ignorances, Errors and Mistakes that are neither wilful nor affected will be pardoned. Let no Man lay any other Foundation, and every one keep fast to that. There is a great stir about an infallible Judge of Controversie, and an unerring interpreter of Scripture. Whereas the common and ordinary places do no more need any Interpretation, then every common Expression; of this Nature is most part of the Gospel, but for the Mysteries and dark Speeches throughout Holy Writ, God will unfold and bring them to Light in his due time. We ought to pray, and through his Grace endeavour to be meet for the *Holy Spirit which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*, 1 Cor.2. 10. We are to set our Seal that God is true, and so is every thing

thing contained in his Word, though we do not presently understand it. God may reveal many things in Succession of time, and what he doth not, none shall mis-carry for not knowing them. The Promise is annexed to Obedience and not Opinion: do this and live: Yea, Faith it self is in order to Practice, *Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus Christ, sent him to Bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities*, Acts 3. 26. All that Jesus did and said was to this end. And whosoever doth really believe that he was sent from God, if he is fully and effectually perswaded, that those things are so which our Saviour hath made known, that Person can never live ill if he let them sink deep into his Heart The whole Scripture as well as that particular Gospel. *Luke* 1. 1. *Is an orderly Declaration of those things, which are most surely believed among us.* Whoso is of this number, will order his Conversation accordingly.

Of Repentance.

In this faln and corrupt State of mankind, Religion begins by aversion from Sin and Conversion unto God, which is Repentance. *We are by Nature the Children of Wrath*, the Seeds of evil grow up into sinful Acts and Habits. As soon as ever we come to years of the least Discretion and Knowledge, there is set before us the good and evil way: And this last seeming pleasant unto us from our Infancy and Childhood, (for therein also Sin breaks forth as soon as the outward Powers of sinning appear) is most commonly chosen. Should our merciful God have given us but one time to make our Choice, and thereby eternally abide, we must all have perished, or not one of a thousand would have been saved of what are now. For who is he, that to his Original Corruption doth not add actual and continued Sin? That to natural Depravation doth not add fresh Perverseness of his own? *All we like Sheep have gone astray: We have turned every one to his own way*, Isa 53 6. We do err and wander of our selves, seeking out for green Pasture, for those foolish and sinful Delights which we know not would rot and destroy us. We would fain be Happy as soon as possible, then that luscious and present appearance of good doth draw us away after it: Did none take Care of us but our selves, we must be consumed in this our Folly; for we go away from the Supream and only Good, and snatch at those things which are hurtful. It pleases the Lord to put before us the good and the evil, to prove whither we will be obedient unto him: Whether

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we who were purposely made for him, will by any thing be taken off from him: Whether we will follow after what he recommends and eschew what he forbids, so approving our selves obedient Children; but alas! We will not believe his Word, for we would willingly have some Tryal by experience, whether it be so or not. We are not contented to trust unto his Goodness and Truth, but for knowing of our selves. What ingratitude, Contempt and dis-belief do we shew unto God, who is so infinitely above us? What unparralled Condescention and Goodness is in him, that he should be pleased to suffer it in this Wise? When not only by the Excellency of what he Commands, but by the sensible disappointment and deceitfulness of what he forbids, we may *Taste and see that the Lord is good*, 1 Pet. 2. 25. We cannot go back of our selves, he sends his Son and Bishop of our souls, who is *the way*, John 14.6. so we may know it; he sends his Holy Spirit to stir and push us forward, so that we may do it. If that when it is fully known what is the utmost good in all the Pleasures of Sin, when notwithstanding all their vain Promises the Man is fully convinced of the Hunger and Emptiness of them. When he is *ready to perish*, Luke 15.17. for want of true Satisfaction and Content, and might have more in the ways of God; if then he would return and come over unto him, it is accepted. Read and consider well the third Chapter of *Jeremiah*, especially *Verse* 1, 7, 12, 13, 22.

It is the great Aggravation of the Sin of Apostacy, concerning which the Apostle speaks so dreadfully. Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. and Chapter 10. 26, 27. *Who were once enlightened and tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good VVord of God, and of the Powers of the VVorld to come, If they shall fall away:* When one formerly hath had experience of the ways of Sin, and then by Conversion hath full experience of the ways of God, to fall away again from them is to pronounce on Satans side, that he is the best Master, as who hath judged of both, and then resolvedly with Deliberation to determine for him; which must be an exceeding Provocation to the Divine Majesty. In like manner the next Degree to that is, when one hath perceived to the utmost all the Delights of Sin and Vanity; when he hath went from Flower to Flower, and is either wearied in the Range, and by insufficiency of some, may be fully perswaded of the like in the rest; yet still to cleave unto these nauseating empty and deluding Follies, to seem to give

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Gods word the Lye which ſpeaks of the Miſery and Deceitfulneſs of them, by owning the Happineſs of them when he is convinced to the contrary; to refuſe to be reformed; to ſhew himſelf deſpitefully and diſdainfully againſt the ways of Holineſs, to give no Credit to the real good that is in them, or when he aſſents there is not to follow after them, but keep the preference to Old dreggy Luſts, making his boaſt of them; to ſtick unto Harlots when *their Skirt is uncovered*, and the Filthineſs of them fully known, yet to eſteem them before the true *Beloved*, *the chiefeſt of ten Thouſand*: When he hath ſufficiently found how little Fruit there is in thoſe things, whereof he was at firſt aſhamed, but ſtill continues in them, and hardens his Face: When he is told, *the end of them is Death*: When for ſome conſiderable time ſufficient to make a true and impartial Deciſion, and *by reaſon of uſe he hath had his Senſes exerciſed to diſcern good and evil*, and he remains in the laſt ſtill: when all theſe things have been done, and yet he perſeveres wilfully and ſtubbornly to follow them againſt the Commands and forbidding of his Maker: All theſe are ſad Signs and Prognoſticks, that ſuch an one will never come to Repentance, but it is juſt with God after repeated Provocations of this manner to give him over to *vile Affections*, and then he may dote upon his Deſtruction, and be utterly eſtranged from the way of Salvation.

It is neceſſary to conſider the Nature and end of things in order to ſtate them aright, many Souls have periſhed by miſtakes and falſe Notions of Repentance: Who have fallen from this Plank and been drowned in the Waters, which would have carried them into the Promiſed Land, if they had relied upon the whole, inſtead of a part thereof; or had not ſuffered it to ſlip from them by intending to lay hold on it, but were not able, it being gone too far from them.

To prevent as much Danger for the future as may be, to have this ſure and ſtedfaſt, let the Reader be once more put in mind whereof he hath read or heard often, that the word in the Greek Language *Metanoia*, by which Repentance is ſignified in the New Teſtament, imports a Change of mind, and is expreſſed in words at length, *Rom.* 12. 2. *Gal.* 6. 15. *Eph* 4. 22, 23, 24. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. It is Superfluous, but yet ſafe to ſet down, though the Obſervation hath been ſo often made already of *Metamelia* and *Metanoia* in 2 *Cor.* 7. 8, 9. Where *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf, I did repent, that is, I

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was vexed for the time, he Expreſſes it by the firſt Word, but when *ye ſorrowed to Repentance, Godly ſorrow worketh Repentance to Salvation not to be repented of*, He Expreſſes that by *Metamia*; which plainly manifeſts that *Metamelia* is ſuch as muſt be again repented of, and doth not avail to Salvation. Repentance in the Old Teſtament is ſeldom named, but is intended by that Phraſe of *turning away from your iniquities*, to this give all the Prophets witneſs, which might be done as to the outward Act. The Evangelical Prophet *Iſaiah* goes further, *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts*, Iſa. 55. 7. but the Goſpel in a more eſpecial manner is a *diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the Heart*, and makes uſe of this word Repentance which reaches to the very ground of it. So that it is not a bare ceaſing to ſpeak or do Evil, and retaining affection to the ſame in the Soul; but that muſt be altered into a real diſlike and hatred of Evil. As Sin doth firſt take its Riſe from the Heart, procuring a Conſent there, and thence come forth into Word and Act; ſo in the forſaking, it may go backwards; and by firſt leaving of the Actions and Speeches, we may at length come to have an inward Deteſtation of it, for leſs then this is inſufficient to perfect the Work of Repentance. Let nothing be ſaid here, or in any other place to exclude that growth and Proficiency of the Chriſtian Life, for that (as none of Gods Works are done of a ſudden) with the beginning, increaſe and exerciſe thereof is the great end of our abiding in this World. The method of the working of his Grace (like driving out † the *Canaanites* from within) is *by little and little*. None need to be perplexed or diſturbed about this; for if any ſhould be taken away in the midſt of his days and of the good Work, yet if our merciful God ſees a ſincere tending towards it, he accepts thereof as if actually done. God forbid on the one hand, any thing ſhould be ſaid to give Licenſe or Encouragement to Sin; ſo again on the other, let all things be done for the Hope and Conſolation of all thoſe, who will come in due time and accept of Mercy. This being the peculiar Priviledge of poor mankind, and the means which our moſt merciful God hath ordained to ſave themſelves from the Wrath to come, far be it from me or any other to ſhorten the extent of it, or to preſcribe exactly at what time, or to what pitch of abhorrence and Contrition it muſt be; Even ſuch as our Supream Judge will be pleaſed to accept of. God is not tyed to the Fancies of Men, if ſome *Propheſie ſmooth things*,

† Exod. 23. 30.

and others too hard Speeches, he will not Ratifie what they say, but condemn whom Man absolves, as again acquit whom Man condemns. Nevertheless he hath declared, *He will Judge the World in Righteousness and with his Truth.* And will rectifie and excuse if it should be here mistaken on the severer hand, as it being against our selves we are not apt to do, neither indeed ought, for *Mercy rejoyceth against Judgment.* Yet for the safety of all; as to give warning against the presumptuous Sinner, who *turns the Grace of God into Wantonness*, who trifles with that which *should lead him to Repentance*, who deceives himself with a slight Remorse and Sorrow, but continues impenitent: And also to affrighten malicious Transgressors, who sin yet more upon the fore-sight of future Repentance: To make the Professor of Christianity look about himself, who doth this or that deliberate Sin, as opposing Gods Truth and Servants of set purpose to comply with the humour of the World, and thinks to come off afterwards upon a general Repentance, or secretly asking Pardon, or the like, and upon this he did trust before; I say, to make all these throughly consider what they do, and not to be deceived in a matter of so great Concern, it is necessary to explain the true Nature of it more fully.

Psal. 96. 13.

Rom. 2.4.

When the mind is now to do such a thing upon through Consideration, how can they say afterwards, they would not have done it? or else to trick with the Almighty by not giving way to that, because he hopes to have this excuse for his Sin, to be *willingly ignorant*, and to do a thing hastily with that reserve, this is to disobey that God, who twice Commands to *consider our ways*, Hag. 1. 5, 7. to endeavour to out-wit him, who is all-wise, or *seek to hide their Counsel from the Lord*, Isa. 29. 15. *Shall not God search this out? For he knoweth the secrets of the Heart*, Psal. 44. 21. And hence may be observed a great difference between the Works of the Flesh, and Perversities of the Spirit: The former being through infirmity of the Flesh, transient Acts and of sudden surprizal may be more easily repented of, because through their Deceitfulness and Temptation the Man may be begniled or overtaken, and when he comes to be convinced of their true Nature, and recover out of them, he may Act *Indignation and Revenge upon himself for the same.* But for the latter sort, when they are resolved on, and all the Circumstances fully known; when neither surprizal nor ignorance, but what was wilful can be pretended for it, this makes the Sin of

Mat. 23. 30.

2 Cor. 7. 11.

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a very deep dye: And when the mind is now to do it, and either doth, or may foresee the reality thereof with its Consequents, How can such an one expect that if it were to do again upon the like Circumstances, he would not, when now he doth the very same? I mean advised continued Acts of Sin, as that Spirit of Stubbornness and Perverseness, opposing the known Truth, Persecution, for which *Paul* gives the Reason why *He obtained Mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief*, 1 Tim. 1.13. which implies that if it had been knowingly done, it would not have been so easily Pardoned. Think upon the Case of Persecutors and Hereticks, who have persisted so after a full Conviction that they were in the wrong, and how many of them have you heard to have came to Repentance? What they have done in secret, it may be a Question, whether that will be accepted; for as their offences have been done openly, so should their Recantation be likewise, if they would have it avail. It is necessary not only to be sorry, or secretly to bewail, but further to undo the fault, as much as it can be. And as God was dishonoured publickly, in like manner to regain his Favour, they should acknowledge their Error before all: To speak after the manner of Men: That God should have repair for his hurt Majesty, have Glory given unto him by Confessing their own Shame. We must do as much to reconcile our selves unto an offended God, as the Great Ones of the Earth require from all that displease them And this is the end of Confession, those things done in private may be there acknowledged unto Almighty God, but in other things the acknowledgment must be as publick as the Sin was. Of all that mischief done to the Church of God, by Error or Violence, smiting with the Tongue or Fist, there have been but few instances left on Record of Penitents of this Nature. Do not those who have Acted cruelly, die suddenly? And in those fierce Disputes, where one side must be convinced to be in the wrong, by the Power and clearness of the Arguments of the other side, yet out of Pride, Obstinacy or Interest, they will go on and seek for Evasions where they cannot Answer; but how few will openly declare themselves to have been in an Error? Where it is purely a defect of Understanding, and a mind willing to be informed, we have some Retractations; but when the perverse Spirit is once mingled with them, it is seldom that they come to Repentance.

Ezra. 10. 2, 3. Lev. 26. 40. Josh. 7.19. Ezra. 10. 10, 11. Mark 1.5. Acts 19. 18.

We, who are ſhort-ſighted and know little, but what we gather by Reaſon and Experience, which requires Succeſſion of time, are admitted unto Repentance, which may ſupply theſe Defects; and ſpace and Liberty is left unto us of a full adviſed Choice of Good or Evil, Life or Death. Now when there is a through and firm perſwaſion of the Vanity and Vexation of Sin, when he doth not barely commit it once, twice, or ſo often as to know what it is, but ſtill continue in *vomiting*; not to be contented to lye only, but to *Wallow in the Mire*, is a Sign that he hath made that his Choice. Again, when God calls by *his Word*, *his Spirit*, by his methods of Judgment and Mercy, the Sinner to be reconciled unto him, yet he ſtands out continually, ſurely then he doth not *Chooſe the Fear of the Lord*, Prov. 1. 29. But is Rebellicus, Diſobedient, refuſing that reverence and ſubjection he owes unto his Maker. And if at length, when he finds he ſhall be puniſhed for the ſame, then he will make a pretended ſubmiſſion. Or ſtood out ſo long of ſet purpoſe, think to pacifie him with a ſlight Sorrow, and *going ſoftly for a time*, by a partial and imperfect Amendment of Life, God will judge of this. Repentance is never too late, if Fruits meet for Repentance are brought forth afterwards, if there doth ſucceed the Chriſtian Life in all Godlineſs and Honeſty, *But if the wicked will turn from all his Sins that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die*, Ezek. 18. 21. God is ſometimes pleaſed to bring home his Servants by Affliction and Sickneſs, and therefore if in that which proves unto Death, there is a true turning of the Soul unto God, and he knows the Man would really order his Converſation according to the Goſpel, and forſake all his former Sins, this Man hath good grounds of Hope for Mercy and Forgiveneſs. But for him who puts it off all his Life-time before, who thought it ſoon enough to make his Peace with God in Sickneſs and Old Age; who was for enjoying the Pleaſures of Sin as long as he could, and when they leave him to come in juſt ſoon enough, as he imagines will ſave his Soul, all for himſelf and nothing for God, ſhall find how it will be accepted. If we had right knowledge of the Godhead, it would prevent abundance of miſtakes and deceits in Matters of Religion; Conſider him as All-wiſe, All-knowing, with whom is Majeſty and Honour, Goodneſs and Power. It is the wickedneſs of the wicked to *Think that God was altogether ſuch an one as himſelf*, Pſal. 50. 21.

2 Pet. 2. 20, 22.

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But whatever is of good report amongſt Men, there ſeeing himſelf is pleaſed to make ſuch reſemblances, we may conclude that he will deal ſo with us as one Superiour dealeth with his Inferiour, for which he is not blamed, but commended in the ſight of the World. The Prophet *Mal.* 1. argues after this manner very much to the preſent purpoſe, and concludes the Chapter, *for I am a great King ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, and my Name is dreadful among the Heathen.* Conceive him therefore ſo, and we are obliged to do as much to pleaſe him and make way for his Acceptance, as any Earthly Monarch whatſoever.

Is it irkſome? It would indeed have been better not to have ſinned, but ſeeing thou haſt, thou muſt ſuffer the difficulty of Repentance or that which is worſe. Put on a good reſolution and the irkſomneſs will wear off; Be encouraged by what the Lord Jeſus ſaith, *I am not come to call the Righteous, but Sinners to repentance*, Mat. 9. 13. *Joy ſhall be in Heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, more then over ninety nine perſons which need no repentance*, Luke 15. 7. When any increaſe is made to Chriſts fold beſides thoſe they had before. Our nature is ſomething aukward and averſe to repent: What to undo and recant? to accuſe our ſelves of fault, folly and ſhame, ſeems hard in our natural proud ſtate. Yet it is not unreaſonable to confeſs what we cannot deny, our imperfection and want of foreſight. It is an act of prudence to return from an errour, and of ſuch an one who is able to diſcern what is really good and profitable. It is an advancement to a better ſtate, Was it not more unreaſonable to do thoſe things at firſt, then it is now to leave them when they are diſcovered to be falſe and evil? But chiefly which ſhould have been mentioned in the firſt place, ſeeing we have offended againſt a Great and Good God, we are required, *Only acknowledge thine iniquity that thou haſt tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord thy God*, Jer. 3. 13. What is more juſt and equal? What hath God deſerved at our hands that we ſhould be ſo Rebellious againſt him? Whatever pride may ſuggeſt, it is no undervaluing for us poor Worms to fall low on our Faces before his Foot-ſtool, to lie down in confuſion, and our ſhame hath covered us, to make our Submiſſion unto him. He is worthy of the greateſt proſtration from far more excellent Creatures, and they pay it accordingly: Whatever the prophane fooliſh and ſcornful Men think of Religious Sneakes, yet the God whom we ſerve is of ſuch Greatneſs and Glory, that ten times greater reverence is moſt due

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unto him then either we do or can give; but the day will come when they ſhall more creep before the Holy One of *Iſrael*, When God ſhall tread down his Enemies. Let them inwardly laugh or ſmile at our crying *peccavi*, they do the ſame unto their Superiours who are but Earth Worms, and they ſhall further take up the very ſame voice when it will be diſmal and fruitleſs, *When they ſhall be rejected and find no place for repentance, though they ſeek for it carefully with Tears*, Heb. 12. 17. We do but now what through the goodneſs and Mercy of God may avail to his forgiveneſs and reward, what they ſhall be forced to in vain to turn from themſelves Guilt and Condemnation. We have no reaſon to upbraid or look little upon one another for ſo doing, for it is the caſe of us all; we have ſinned and are worthy of puniſhment, he alone is Happy and Wiſe who nſeth this means to prevent it.

It is juſt that the Soul ſhould be in the utmoſt ſubjection to the Father of Spirits, that it ſhould both pray and endeavour to be turned at the command of him who faſhioned it, to comply with the will of him who did both create and alſo would renew it. The firſt was done without our conſent and power, the ſecond will not ſeeing God is to be glorified by our free obedience, and himſelf hath enabled us to give it, without our working together with him who transforms the hearts of Men. Becauſe we can juſt refuſe, muſt we neceſſarily do ſo? He hath ordered the heart ſo that it may turn either way, and ſhould not it go towards its firſt mover, turn unto the Lord our God? *Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God*, Jer. 31. 8. *Turn unto me, and I will turn unto you, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*, Zech. 1. 3. There muſt be ſome work of our own to concur with Gods Act, and be partaker of his gracious Promiſe. The heart is reſtleſs and diſſatisfied until fixed on its proper Object, which is God alone. It covets after this or that thing, but ſtill doth not find content, wandring up and down in its purſuit after Happineſs, but never meets with it: Every leaſt appearance and ſhadow is catched at, but the only true and chiefeſt good is not minded, nor ſought after. *My people hath been loſt ſheep, they have gone from Mountain to Hill, they have forgot their reſting place*, Jer. 50. 6. As the Soul hath a natural deſire to know God, not in thoſe who have defaced it with ſenſuality and bruti ſhneſs, but who exert the operations thereof as they ſhould; ſo when it comes to be acquainted with him, is in peace. It can be contented for the preſent, and wait ſome time

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for the full enjoyment of him; When it is once ſenſible, God is willing of his Creatures Happineſs, hath placed them here only to try them, and all his dealings are Wiſdom, Truth and Righteouſneſs: When it comes throughly to know the order of divine affairs, then it both admires and is ſatisfied with the whole will and good pleaſure of our God, ſits down contented, and patiently bears with the things of this preſent time, and hopes for, nay is aſſured of good things to come. But however, hath not the leaſt doubt or fear of future Evils; which is a very conſiderable difference between the Righteous and the Wicked. Repentance firſt brings into this happy ſtate, frees from the Spirit of errour and giddineſs, makes him to leave off thoſe unſatisfactory Vanities, ſuffers him not to be ſtill deluded with falſe Imaginations, tedious travel, and after all Vexatious diſappointment. When by reaſon of the pain and inſufficiency that is in all things of this World there is an utter deſpair of Happineſs, this ſhews him where it is. *My heart and my fleſh faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart and my portion for ever*, Pſal. 72. 26. We know him as yet by Faith, and our rejoycing in him is according to the meaſure of that. Whatever good and comfort is in pure and undefiled Religion, in an univerſal and conſtant complyance with it, which is much every way (as may be partly ſeen by what hath been, and is to be ſaid) but much more would be perceived by him who makes a throngh experience of it; all this comes in by repentance, which is the beginning thereof, for it forſakes ſin and keeps the Commandments.

This was the firſt Doctrine *John* the forerunner and Chriſt himſelf Preached, *Mark.* 1. 4, 15. And it was alſo the meſſage in which the Prophets before came; *Moſes* ſpeaks very little thereof. *He that deſpiſed* Moſes *Law died without Mercy*, Heb. 10. 28. God gave his people at firſt ſevere and ſtrict Commandments without making ſo full a diſcovery of Pardon and Forgiveneſs, but then thoſe who became obnoxious to the guilt and judgment of the Law, did not know how to eſcape. The Lord who is rich in Mercy, did in time reveal it more and more to thoſe who would turn from their evil doing. Before the laſt threatning there goes out another warning and invitation to ſubmit, *Thus ſaith the Lord, Behold I frame evil againſt you, and deviſe a device againſt you, return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good, and they ſaid there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart,*

Jer.

Jer. 18. 11, 12. Strange Stubbornneſs! that Men ſhould be thus provoking to God, and act ſo madly againſt themſelves; we ſee what a mighty force there is in Luſt and Pride. They ſinned yet more in not believing his wonderful offer, they incenſed him yet more in not being overcome by his goodneſs, but he abounded in this as they did in iniquity, confirming the truth of the Prophet, *Let favour be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn Righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 26. 10. All Gods doings are gradual and ſucceſſive, both his Works of Nature and Grace: The moſt ineſtimable and accompliſhment of all Mercies was in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; of this diſcovery was made to the Fathers by little and little. If I may ſo ſpeak with the greateſt reverence and adoration with thanksgiving, for ſuch his gracious Methods, God ſhewed himſelf the moſt hard Maſter at firſt. The Law given, *Gen.* 2. 17. was peremptory and penal, then he begins, *Gen.* 8. 21. *&* *Gen.* 9. to releaſe off his ſeverity, and then to *Moſes* he proclaims himſelf *Merciful and Gracious, long Suffering*, Exod. 34. 6. But yet did not ſo fully make known to him the Doctrine of Repentance as he did afterwards to the Prophets. Then comes *John* the Baptiſt, *Mat.* 3. 2, 3. Afterwards *He* (who was bringing into the World ſo long before, and to whom all the Old Teſtament hath Relation) *came Preaching the Goſpel of the Kingdom of God, and ſaying, the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, Repent ye and believe the Goſpel*, Mark 1. 14, 15. And now it is eſtabliſhed for all perſons, times and places, as appears, *Luke* 24. 46. Man muſt not preſume to ſin yet more, upon hopes of more Mercy; *For as Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of many, and unto them that look for him ſhall he appear the ſecond time without ſin unto Salvation*, Heb. 9. 28. So for thoſe who deſpiſe and ſin wilfully, there is a dreadful threatning, *Heb.* 10. 26, 27, 28, 29. *God now commandeth all Men every where to repent, Becauſe he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all Men in that he hath raiſed him from the dead*, Acts 17. 30, 31. The whole Counſel of God is contained in *Faith and Repentance*; compare *Acts* 20. verſ. 20, 21. with verſ. 26, 27. To believe and to do is the ſubſtance of all: That is Faith, and Repentance puts upon the ſecond. *Ceaſe to do Evil, learn to do Well.*

It is not only to be ſorry for the paſt, or a little diſpleaſed for the preſent, but ſhews it ſelf by Obedience for the future. To this the promiſes belong, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments*, Mat. 19. 17. ſaid he, *VVho though he were a Son, yet learned he Obedience by the things which he ſuffered: And being made perfect he became the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 8, 9. The Book of *Deuteronomy* is wholly on this ſubject; there is ſcarce one Chapter throughout the Law of *Moſes*, the Pſalms, Prophets, Goſpel and Epiſtles, but hath ſomewhat relating to this. Every where is line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, and all to this purpoſe that *Man ſhould obey God*, for he hath an abſolute Dominion over us all by Creation, Preſervation, and Redemption. *Ye ſhall do my Judgments and keep mine Ordinances to walk therein; I am the Lord your God, Ye ſhall therefore keep my Statutes and Judgments, which if a Man do, he ſhall live in them: I am the Lord*, Lev. 18. 4, 5. So in the Preface to the Ten Commandments, *I am the Lord thy God*, and as he was the God of the *Iſraelites* by bringing them out of the Land of *Ægypt*, ſo he is of us Chriſtians by redeeming us from Spiritual *Ægypt*, the Bondage of *Satan*, *Sin* and *Death*. Of Obedience.

Even we require Obedience and Service from the Horſe and Ox; nay, from the very ſame Creatures as our Selves, Children and Servants, and they do ſuch things only becauſe we command them, and think it no ſhame or diſcredit. And we may allow our ſelves to be ten thouſand degrees more inferiour to Almighty God then they are unto us; neither ſhould we be unwilling or aſhamed to do ſuch things purely and principally for his Commandment. This is properly Obedience, and no other God will accept of. *When ye faſted and mourned on the fifth and ſeventh Month, did yet at all faſt unto me, even to me?* Zech. 7. 5. Obſerve the patheticalneſs thereof in that it is twice repeated, and this is applicable to all the actions of our life, do we this or that thing only to glorifie God thereby? and have we no other motive but in Subordination to that? *And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat and drink for your ſelves?* verſ. 6. Some private ends of your own, or moral conſiderations. Do not diſſemble, for one knows the very ſecrets of your hearts; There is a proud principle nouriſhed by ſome, who are willing to ſave their Soul, Mal. 1. 6. 1 Cor. 10. 31.

and think if such a thing is done, it is well enough, but do not regard with what mind, vainly imagining God would have his Work done any way so it be done, but doth not regard with what affection they do it. And therefore if they practise Righteousness or Temperance, though they will speak out to the World that they do it for Health or Reputation, and if they have a little respect to God in the heart they refuse to utter that. They will declare openly, they do such a thing because the King or some Superiour enjoyn them to do it, but either through bashfulness or pride on which that is founded, will not make it known that they do such things, because it is the Commandment and Will of God. They may talk of the fashionable Vertue, but not of *Grace*. They will speak in the Words of *Seneca*, but not the *Language of Canaan*, but if they have a serious mind to get the favour of God and be saved, let them consider what is Written, *Joel* 2. 26. *Mark* 8. 38. If their actions are not principally because God requires such, howsoever specious and upright they may appear before Men, he is no more pleased with it, then you with the work of your Servant, when he doth it of his own head, and is ashamed or disdainful to do it upon your commanding him. When Courtiers and Servants of Noble Men will own their condition before all, and speak of their respective Masters, should we not much more do so as to our Master which is in Heaven? Is he not greater and better then they? *Let your light so shine before Men, that others may see your good Works and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven*, Mat. 5. 16. His Servants may praise him for such an ones well doing, and *glorifie God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel*, 2 Cor. 9. 13. And strangers may conclude, *God is in him of a Truth*, that he hath some real and invisible principle of action which he keeps unto through good report or evil report, notwithstanding all profit or inconvenience. It tends to the Glory of God here on Earth, when things pertaining to him are done openly before all, and not in a Corner: *He that was not heard to cry or to lift up his Voice in the Street*, who did not love to be taken notice of for his Miracles and doing good, neither did for affectation shew forth his Extraordinary zeal and service to God, yet hath two observable sayings, *John* 3. 21. *John* 18. 20. If one designs nothing but pure Obedience, neither credit nor interest, not the least leaven of by-respects, the more publickly it is done, the better it is: If he finds himself ashamed of well doing, let him do violence

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to that ſinful humour and make it more viſible unto Men; if on the other hand he believes he may have praiſe of Men, there *let him do it in ſecret, and thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret, himſelf ſhall reward thee openly*, Mat. 6. 4. The reaſon of things is to be attended unto. Our God whom we ſerve is a Jealous God, and his Glory he will not give unto another; So is he more pleaſed with Mens Obedience when it is pure, uncorrupt, and nothing a ſharer with it. How doth he reſent it? *When their fear towards me is taught by the precept of Men*, Iſa. 29. 13. Which makes directly againſt compulſion to Religious Duties, for that deſtroys the Nature of true Obedience. Doth God want the aid of Man to make others Obedient unto him? If it could be done, What Glory would it be unto him? But they cannot by outward violence, they may bring one like a Beaſt to the Sacrifice, but ſtill there is nothing of the ſubjection of the mind. God cares not for Hypocritical Services, or a bare outward Submiſſion; He may as well be glorified in Beaſts, the Blood of ſlain Bullocks or Goats, for there is a ſubjection of thoſe Creatures even unto Death. The Brute is knocked down before the Lord, but he is better pleaſed when the Will of a free and reaſonable Creature is Obedient unto his Will. When we do not follow our own ways in oppoſition to the guide of the Lord: When ſelf-will is not cringed unto, but the Word of God complyed withal.

He created all things for his own Glory, and Man the Principal inhabitant of the Earth cannot ſhew it forth in a more excellent way. Let him offer up every Creature for a Sacrifice, do more then *Solomon* did to ſet forth the Magnificence of his Temple, yet he adds nothing to what God had before, *for the World is mine and the fulneſs thereof*, Pſal. 50. 12. The merciful God delights not in the blood of dumb Creatures, he received them only as ſome atonement for Mans tranſgreſſion, and as a type of that great Sacrifice which was once offered for all. Herein he ſhewed Mercy that he would accept of the life of a Beaſt for a more noble offender; Sacrifice and burnt Offerings thou wouldſt not, but the doing of thy will. He is ſubject to no neceſſities, imperfection or low deſires, and therefore thouſands of Gold and Silver are nothing to him, they are his own already; He did firſt create, and now diſpoſeth of them; but there is ſomething ſtill, which I do in no wiſe ſay, he hath put out of his own power, yet he is pleaſed not to accept of it unleſs freely beſtowed. *My Son give*

me thine heart, Prov. 23. 26. *O that there was such an heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my Commandments, that it might be well with them, and their Children forever*, Deut. 5. 29. He seems to long for it, and that for their good; for he who hath so much already and will be likewise glorified on them if they refuse, cannot receive any addition by so small a Mite. It is only that another should do all things to obey him.

Yet wretched and froward Man who knows not, nor will be perswaded what is for his good, who would fain be reconciled unto God, a Being so much above, and mightier then he, though it be more out of fear and selfishness then love, for that he is willing to give any thing rather then the right one; with what anguish and earnestness, but upon mistaken Grounds doth he expostulate? *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or ten thousand Rivers of Oyl? Shall I give my first born for my Transgression, or the fruit of my body for the sin of my Soul? He hath shewed thee, O Man what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do Justice and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God*, Mic. 6. 7, 8. Then thou must submit thy Will unto his Will. Many do offer up the Sacrifice of Praise, use much Devotion, will bestow liberally Alms to the poor, frankly part with their Money, but not their Lusts, make a shew of Subjection unto God, yet keep their own Humours, and will not cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Obedience of Christ; yet this one thing is more then them all, and which God principally insists upon. He that Prayes, gives Thanks, or receives the Sacrament doth he them out of Obedience? Then that is to oblige him to other things of Duty. Doth he not them to the intent that he may be better enabled to this? Or is he determined not to do this, and put God of with only begging Pardon? When a matter is in Controversie, and the adverse party will not give it up unto him who hath Power and Right on his side, but think to come of by asking formal Forgiveness for the Omission. What would your selves conclude of such dealing? God is neither to be mocked nor trifled withal; he will not accept of Lip-Labour instead of Obedience of the Heart, outward Services will not pass with him for inward Transgression of the Will. *If I regard iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear me*, Psal. 66. 18. It is rather a Voice of babling or whining then of Prayer and Supplication, if there is the Spirit of Stubbornness

bornneſs within: But however if done in a right manner, ſtill he is better pleaſed, when we have a good and honourable Eſteem of his awful Majeſty, then by ſpeaking forth of the ſame with our Lips. If he did hear only by the hearing of the Ear, our Voice how loud ſoever would not reach unto Heaven; and if it did, What are a few good Words unto him, unleſs our ſelves do really aſſent that it is ſo? What do ſignifie putting up Petitions unto him, unleſs we endeavour after the things we pray for? We do rather diſhonour him by asking for Grace and his Holy Spirit, if when he gives we receive them in vain by not working together with them. In the Sacrament we expreſs our Love to the Lord Jeſus, we try to exalt him, and ſhew our ſelves thankful as much as we can, but ſtill there is ſomething more he looks after, then ſtrains of gratitude and Complemental Expreſſions, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I ſay?* Luke 6. 46. The end of all the Commandments, of all the Duties of Religion, of all thoſe Tranſactions that ever paſſed between God and Man, and whatſoever he hath revealed of himſelf, is Obedience.

We cannot imagine any other way of approving our ſelves unto him; thoſe who have the beſt Eſteem of us, and are willing to do every thing we would have, they get our Love and Favour. Would we carry our ſelves after the ſame manner to the God of all things, He is pleaſed (Oh infinite Condeſcention and Goodneſs!) to manifeſt his Love, call us *Friends*, Jam. 2. 23. John 15. 14. and hath promiſed a Reward. We have Kings and Governors of our Fleſh which rule over us, and we give them reverence; ſhall we not much rather be in Subjection to the Father of Spirits and live? For they verily, for a few days here on Earth exerciſe Dominion over us after their own Pleaſure, and for the publick Good, but he for our Profit that we might be Partakers of his Holineſs, have ſome little Taſte of good things here, and be ever Happy with him hereafter. There are the Arguments of his Soveraignty, Greatneſs, Right and Propriety, but there is one more to which the Judgment of an Heathen, and the Senſe of all mankind beſides Witneſſeth, Saith *Ariſtotle*, *All People obey that which is profitable for them.* And upon this Reaſon our God doth deſerve Obedience from all Nations and People of the World, for now he hath made them ſo as they are, that he might ſet before them the good and the evil, He hath moſt excellently conſulted for their Being by giving them Statutes ſo righteous and holy as he

Acts 17. 28.

Ariſt. Rhet. lib. 1. cap. 8.

he hath done, which are to make them as Happy, as conſidering their imperfect Condition, they can be whilſt in this World.

O what great Exhortation hath our God given to bring all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* over unto him, that if they will hearken unto, and conſider thereof, if they would **Remember*, they muſt be turned unto the Lord their God. He would be reconciled to the World, or he would never make known ſo many preſſing Motives to it; that whoſoever would attend to them, and not ſuffer the Temptations of Satan or his own Fleſh to draw him aſide, it is impoſſible he ſhould ſtand out ſtill in Rebellion againſt God. There is ſome miſ-apprehenſion which is one cauſe of that Enmity and Backwardneſs in the Heart of Man towards him: If it was the Pleaſure of our God that the greater part of mankind, or *that any ſhould periſh*, he would never have done ſo much as he hath that *all ſhould come to Repentance*. He hath given them Power to Act freely and of themſelves, ſuffering them ſo to do (as is very agreeable to a Life of Tryal) God hath done all that lies on his part, affording to Man Revelation, his Word without, his Spirit within, and hath Commanded to comply with them.

* Pſal. 22. 27.

2 Pet. 3. 3.

But if he will not do this, if he continues *willingly ignorant*, if he of ſet purpoſe refuſes to hear or read Gods Truth. If he will not make uſe of thoſe means of Grace and Salvation which are appointed, and he is Commanded to do, this is *deſpiſing knowledge*, and refuſing Subjection unto the Almighty. *Upon this Hinge turns the whole of Mans Salvation*; for by Thought and Reaſon he Acts, (none is mad at all times, but hath Conſideration even of that kind of Life) and if he firſt determines not to be acquainted with the ways of God, then that natural Averſation (which is too much in us all, and would likewiſe hinder the beſt if not thus prevented) will certainly keep him off, and that will increaſe more by Sin and evil Habits, and ſo Satan will get him at the firſt Aſſault. Strange! that this wilful and ſtubborn Temper, ſhould creep into that Ingenuity which all pretend unto. That this way of Deſtruction ſhould be choſen againſt that Self-preſervation, and willingneſs to be Happy which is in all Men. That reaſonable Creatures ſhould obſtinately ſtick to that which is ſo full of Danger, and forſake that wherein is all imaginable Security. Is there in the only way of Peace any thing hard and aukward? Why ſhould he lie under thoſe Thoughts? Conſult throughly, and they will prove otherwiſe. *Incline your Ear and*

come

come unto me, hear and your Soul ſhall live, Iſa. 55. 3. Knoweth he not, that if he will do this, he ſhall be ſaved? And what is he unwilling or afraid of that? If he would weigh the Arguments he muſt both believe and conſider, and then let him Act contrary if he can; but he doth not care to be perſwaded to be a Chriſtian. Then, *O Man, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf*: Who can Pity him that periſhes by Hunger and Thirſt, when Victuals are ſet by him, and he might receive them if he would? If *People are deſtroyed for lack of Knowledge*, Hoſ. 4. 6. What can we ſay to it when it is their own Fault? It is at their Peril, if they refuſe and contemn thoſe means which God hath appointed to bring unto eternal Life, without which they muſt miſ-carry: *For if the Word ſpoken by Angels was ſtedfaſt, and every diſobedience received a juſt Recompence of Reward, How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation*, Heb. 2. 2, 3.

The Promiſe in ſundry places of Scripture is unto Godlineſs, *Pſal.* 4. 3. *Pſal.* 101. 2. 4. 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. and the threatning is againſt ungodlineſs, *Pſal.* 9. 17. *Rom.* 1. 18. 2 *Pet.* 2. 6. 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. *Jude.* 15. Where is a right uſe of the Ordinances and poſitive Duties, all Obedience will likewiſe follow. On the contrary when they are neglected, it is Diſobedience and Contempt to that God who enjoyns them. Many are Friendly and juſt towards Man, temperate as to themſelves, but yet are ungodly. The World thinks, What harm do theſe? Why, may they not go to Heaven? Not conſidering what the great Provocation of ungodlineſs is, and they do miſtake in not ſeeing the firſt Reaſon of the Commandments of God: Which in Truth are for the welfare of mankind, but this is not all; for the good or inconveniences, conſequent to the Obſervation or Violation of them, as pertaining to ſhort-lived mankind, do not Riſe ſo high as to have or deſerve eternal Rewards or Puniſhments. The Act of Sin is ſmall and weak, but *the ſtrength of Sin is the Law*, 1. Cor. 15. 56. It receives the Aggravation from going againſt that High and Divine Authority which hath eſtabliſhed things ſo: For it is too much a fond and proud Opinion, that all things are for our ſelves, if I do neither harm to my Neighbour nor my Self, and I commit Sin, What great Evil is in it? Is a common Queſtion. Whereas they might look up and conſider, that God in his doings towards the Children of Men, deſigns his own Glory in the firſt place, Of ungodlineſs.

place, as well as their Good. Now if there is Disobedience and Contempt towards himself, and Transgression of what he hath Enacted, here is the exceeding evil of Sin, though no prejudice comes thereby to any mortal Creature. It is what lieth in them, making void Gods Dominion, and in plain terms, that he shall not Reign over them. The great matter is, Whether his Creatures are subject unto him, they are so indeed: But whether themselves think so, and will shew themselves to be such, as the ungodly Man doth not: *Thou hast said in thine Heart, I am, and none else besides me*, Isa. 47. 10. And hereby may be seen the Hainousness of his iniquity, for he is an open Rebel, who refuses to tread Gods Courts, he is one of himself, and will not acknowledge dependance from an higher Power. He neglects for his part, what all the World thinks due, *viz.* The Worship of God. So that it will fare better with Superstitious Christians, unbelieving *Jews*, and *Pagan* Idolaters; for they intended some Homage though a mistaken one, to the Great Lord of all things, but he doth none at all. He says within himself? *It is vain to serve God, and what Profit is it to keeep his Ordinances?* Mal. 3. 14. Whereas it is his own Fault, for he might know if he would wait all the days of this short Life, for the exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. He might in the mean while perceive some good in the Solemn Meetings if he would come with a pure mind, and behave himself as he should. But he is glad of any excuse, when in reality that (as other Excuses) is a further Aggravation of his Sin, and so it will appear, *When God who now knows, shall manifest the secrets of all Hearts*: for People who are born in the Christian Church, entred by Baptism, and afterwards wilfully make themselves Strangers from the Covenant of Grace, and be without God in the World; What is this, but as much as they can to exempt themselves from his Government, and because it may hereafter Rise up against them, they would utterly destroy it if they might. Whoever impartially judges of these things, may perceive the exceeding Sinfulness of ungodliness. It is the greatest degree of Sin that Men can arrive unto. How many times is mention made in Scripture of *refusing to hear the Word of God, and not calling upon him, There is no Fear of God before their Eyes, they forget him*; and such like Expressions, by which the Abomination of iniquity is set forth. All these Sins are immediately against God himself. *If one Man sin against another, the Judge shall Judge him; but if a Man sin against*

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the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him? 1 Sam. 2. 25. When God doth ſet up his Kingdom, for ſuch to endeavour to get from under it, muſt be a great Provocation. As now if any Prince ſhould iſſue forth his Proclamation, and Order it to be read and fixt up, He would certainly be diſpleaſed at thoſe who ſtop their Ears, and take no notice of it, and ſo it will be as to all thoſe Potſherds of the Earth, who ſhew the like Stubbornneſs or diſdain againſt their Maker.

Of Preaching.

In good Manners we are to hear what God will Command us, before we put up our Petitions unto him. The Maſter is at Liberty to ſpeak before the Servant utters his Supplication: Yea, all that the Lord hath ſaid we ſhould do; ſo that is firſt to be known, for the end of Prayer is to ask Forgiveneſs for former Tranſgreſſions, to beg Grace and Power to be more obedient for the future. When God delivered his Law in that terrible manner on *Mount Sinah* the People were afraid, that they ſaid unto *Moſes, Speak thou with us, and we will Hear*, Exod. 20. 19. and it is promiſed further, *We will hear, and do it*, Deut. 5. 27. This way our Fore-fathers choſe, and accordingly he did during his Life-time, and left written a Copy of the Law which ſhould be for ever. Moſes *of Old time hath in every City them that Preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day*, Acts 15. 21. He was both Preached and Read. *The* Jews *received the Law by the Diſpoſition of Angels, and have not kept it*, Acts 7. 53. But Chriſtians received it from a Greater, even the Son of God himſelf, and have not obeyed it. Chriſt hath thoſe who continually Preach him as *Moſes* had, by how much he is not only greater then him, but the very Angels of God. And receiving it immediately from his Father, he came down and made it known upon Earth. Who had *a Voice out of the Cloud, which ſaid, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed: Hear ye him*, Mat. 17. 5. The Author to the *Hebrews* inſiſteth upon the ſame Argument and Compariſon, *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: For if they eſcape not, who refuſed him that ſpake on Earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him, that ſpeaketh from Heaven*, Heb. 12. 25. Who though he is long ſince aſcended on High, and ſits at the right hand of the Father, yet ſpeaks to us even now by his Word, *He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my Words, hath one that judgeth him, the Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him at the laſt day*, John 12. 48. And if we will not hear them, neither

would we be perſwaded, if Chriſt ſhould come once again into the World after the ſame manner as he did. He hath ſent forth Labourers into his Harveſt with full Power and Commiſſion, *He that heareth you, heareth me: And he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me*, Luke 10. 16. Theſe are to do the Work of their Great Maſter, to ſeek them that are loſt, and endeavour according to their utmoſt Power to bring many unto Life.

And he ſhewed me Joſhua *the High Prieſt ſtanding before the Lord, and Satan ſtanding at his right hand to reſiſt him*, Zech. 3. 1. When any thing is deſigned for the good of mankind, he will be ſure to hinder it as much as he can. And it is obſervable among all the parts of Religion: None hath been ſo much ſtifled, refuſed or corrupted as the Ordinance of Preaching. Nothing is more muttered againſt, or endeavoured to be put off as the Faithful handling and Application of the Word. The great prejudice againſt it is Luſt, and Conſequent to that an affected ignorance. Seeing Men will not do accordingly, they think it the better the leſs they know or hear of the things of God; whereas this being wilful and out of a wicked mind, makes their Diſobedience yet worſe, becauſe they add this as the beginning and cauſe of all, *They deſire not the knowledge of Gods ways*, Job 21. 14. *Thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteth my words behind thee*, Pſal. 50. 17. This is the principal Device Satan makes uſe of to deceive the whole World, by falſe and ſly Suggeſtions he keeps them off from being acquainted with the Way and Truth of God, and thence ſprings up a ſecret Enmity in the firſt place againſt the Word, and thoſe who divide it aright, giving to every one his Portion. There is none grown up to that height of wickedneſs, as to belch out Blaſphemies againſt Heaven, or ſpeak openly againſt Scripture; yet in the Heart of the natural Man doth lie hid an Hatred, and this ſhews it ſelf by oppoſing them, who are ſet in defence of the Goſpel. The real cauſe is concealed, but then he Picks ſome little Exceptions, or ſeeks out for occaſion (as that may eaſily be done by an evil mind) to Speak or Act againſt them. Miſerable infatuation! That Men ſhould ſet themſelves againſt thoſe, who in good Conſcience and the greateſt Earneſtneſs endeavour to lead them up to the Holy Hill. It can be no harm to reſcue any from the place of Torment, to pull him (though never ſo much againſt his Will) like a Brand out of the Fire.

Now

Now go write it before them in a Table, and note it in a Book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: That this is a Rebellious People, Lying Children, Children that will not hear the Law of the Lord: Which ſay to the Seers, ſee not: And to the Prophets, Propheſie not unto us right things, ſpeak unto us ſmooth things, Propheſie Deceits, Iſa. 30. 8, 9, 10. for they can hear and approve of ſuch, and too many are carried away with this Temptation. *The Prophets Propheſie falſly, and my People Love to have it ſo,* Jer. 5. 31. It is not ſo much taken notice of, becauſe it ſuites with their Humours and Inclinations: For want of Love they think his Commandments grievous when delivered aright and preſſed home to the Conſcience. It is obſervable, the Spirit of God ſpeaks very much of the above-mentioned Corruption, but little or nothing againſt thoſe ſevere and rigid Men, againſt whom the World crys out ſo much, See *Iſa.* 9. 16. *Iſa.* 58. 1. *Jer.* 14. 14. *Jer.* 23. throughout *Ezek.* 13. & 34. *Chap. Lam.* 2. 14. *Jer.* 48. 10. *Mal.* 2. 8, 9. *Mal.* 3. 3, 4. *Luke* 20 21. 2 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2. *Gal.* 1. 10. 1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2. 2 *Tim.* 2. 14, 15, 16. *Tit.* 2. 1, 6, 7. 1 *Pet.* 4 11. *Mat.* 15. 14. There are more Texts concerning this horrible abuſe, and for the Remedy thereof, all which are fulfilled in theſe days, and ſhould be amended. That which moved *Pilate* to deliver our Saviour, doth move theſe to betray his Heritage: *They are willing to content the People,* Mark 15. 15. and therefore ſuffer them to lie ſtill in their Ignorance and Diſobedience. *Her Prophets are light and treacherous Perſons,* Zeph. 3. 4. they betray the Cauſe of God, for they do not enforce it with that Power they might. Some, as if they were aſhamed of his Office, do not deliver his Meſſage, do not uſe the Arguments he hath given, but are *Fooliſh Prophets that follow their own Spirit,* Ezek. 13. 3. as if their Whims and Notions were better and more perſwaſive then the *Oracles of God.* He would be reconciled unto the World, as they would willingly be at Peace with him. And what hinders this bleſſed Accommodation? *I have not ſent theſe Prophets, yet they ran: I have not ſpoken to them, yet they Propheſied. But if they had ſtood in my Counſel, and had cauſed my People to hear my Words* (Mark that) *Then they ſhould have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.* Jer. 23. 21, 22. If they would inſiſt on thoſe Motives which flow from the Word of Truth, and let them run with their due Cogency, we ſee here what would have been the Effect of it. The foregoing words are, *In the latter days ye ſhall conſider*

it perfectly. In the end of time many will reflect, that if those set over them had done as they should, and their own Conscience did stir them to do; such Evils might have been escaped. *Thy Prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee, and they have not discovered thine iniquity to turn away thy Captivity*, Lam. 2. 14. They have not used their utmost diligence, to keep off from that threatning which is now manifested under the Gospel.

What could God have done more for his Vineyard then he hath done? His Decrees and Dispensations concerning mankind are righteous, He hath done things sufficient for them to be Happy and avoid Misery. Only he hath permitted them as free and reasonable Creatures to Act of themselves. He doth move and stir up their Wills to that which is good; Those whom his Providence suffers to be Pastors, He prompts by his Spirit to be faithful in that Trust reposed in them. To the hearers are committed the lively Oracles, their own Conscience, there is the opportunity of good Books and Conversation with other helps and advantages which might be improved for the benefit of mankind. But the only thing is, they are not forced, and it is expected what they do, it should be with a willing mind; considering which they have Assistances sufficient to work out their own Salvation. God hath been pleased to establish all things in an orderly way. What pertain to his Kingdom over the Sons of Men, have their Rules and their appointed means, and his Blessing doth always Accompany them. He doth not work Miracles, where the thing may be done in a way he hath already shewed. *To turn the Hearts of the Fathers unto the Children, and the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the just, to make ready a People prepared for the Lord*, Luke 1. 17. He gives his Word, Spirit and Ministers. By the help of them, and putting forth the strength God hath given us, all this may very well be accomp'ished. As the great Super-intendent in his Works of Nature hath left them to go in their Course, so in his Kingdom of Grace which is over the Souls of Men, he hath ordained alike Method to spring forth and increase by appointed means.

The great and only business which hath passed between God and Men, is concerning their Obedience in this World, and their Salvation in that which is to come. And therein may be observed from the very first Creation of them a most wise contrivance of things on Gods part; but the utmost folly, giving back and rebellion on ours. Had we consented and for us performed what

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we might have done, there had been no ſeparation between God and us, which our iniquities have now made. Wilful ignorance and ſloth hath occaſioned this evil, by not improving the Talent, but hiding it in a Napkin. Would any one act according to the grace and power given him, and according to the way ſhewed, he ſhall never miſcarry: *Chriſt* hath made up for *Adams* Tranſgreſſion, ſo that the Lord being our helper, we may do the things well-pleaſing in his ſight, if our ſelves will ſincerely ſet to do them. God is faithful, and would not try our Obedience by more then we are able to perform; he gives aid, and offers more if we would but ſeek and make uſe of it. Doth any one deſire to be ſaved? Who doth not? Why then there is no more required but his real working together with the grace of God, and according to his means. It is aſtoniſhing to conſider, that ſeeing God hath given all thoſe great and powerful Arguments to ſtir up Man to his Duty, and then all the faculties of his Soul have a tendency towards it; yet ſo few are brought over to a right ſence and univerſal practice of Religion. But Satan trys all ways to drive them off, and then is their own averſation through corrupt nature to the things of God; but here again, if they would conſult his Word, they would not be ignorant of thoſe devices of the Enemy, which might be rendred ineffectual, and then by ſtriving contrary and giving diligence, that averſation would by degrees wear of. There is ſufficient done that all might come to life, *It is not the Will of your Father which is in Heaven that one of theſe little ones ſhould periſh*, Mat. 18. 14.

Some do needleſly inquire concerning the number of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved. When the Queſtion was asked our Lord, *Luke* 13.23,24. he gives no direct anſwer to it, but commands to take care for themſelves; and if every one did ſo, there would be no need to ask ſuch a Queſtion. This is certain, every Man or Woman may perform thoſe conditions to which Salvation is promiſed; each ſingle perſon may obey God, keep the ſayings of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and patiently continue in Well-doing. The Scripture obſerving the Irreligion and wickedneſs of Men in thoſe Generations when it was Penned, and foreſeeing how it would be in following Ages, ſpeaketh in that wiſe as it doth; but yet the ſame word ſaith, *All the ends of the World ſhall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the Nation ſhall Worſhip before thee*, Pſal. 22.27. which is to be fulfilled, as the others have been, and Gal. 3. 8.

and are. Every one is called upon to this; it is in the power of all to hear or read the Scriptures, to Pray, to examine further evidences of it, and Faith comes by these things, and he will believe. He may again attend to the Word of Exhortation, and then he will do: For that is to be said for the excellency of our Religion, that never any one could see all that may be said for it, and then reject it; If the wicked Man would suffer himself to know what might be alledged for Obedience unto God, himself would not refuse it. He is afraid, and dares not consider of the Arguments which enforce the same, for then he would be converted and healed; and therefore it is not without cause the subtle Enemy labours so much to hinder from that. Whereas if he is in the most natural state, yet if he is endued but with common Wisdom, he should not presently set that at naught which in this carries so much of its Divinity and Truth. And he should suspect his own course because he doth as it were distrust those excuses and pretences (for Reasons he hath none) for his Wickedness, in that they dare not in the least stand in competition with what may be said for the contrary Way.

Men could never go on as now they do, unless worse then the deaf Adder, they stop the Ear and refuse to hear the Voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely. They act commonly by slight apprehension of things; as for those of this World, they suffer to sink deep and lie at the very ground of their Hearts, but for heavenly they either shut them quite out, or they lie scattered at the top, *and have no deepness of Earth and no Root*, Mat. 13. 5, 6. It is seldom that things are done altogether in a hurry, but generally people act what they think best to be done. In the very heart there is an approbation of them, they may outwardly commend another kind, but then they have within them a secret reserve, and give preference to what they do, or else hope to escape the danger. The great controversie in the World is, Whether Men should obey the Law of God, or the Law of Sin; Whether they shall do according to his Will, or be Master of their own Actions. None will deny that God is to be obeyed, nor can they gain-say against his Law which is Good, Just and Reasonable, this is allowed of even by the transgressour: But then for following his own course, he hath some fancies which are kept secret within himself, and are at the very bottom of his mind, which with him do weigh down those general Considerations. The present

ſent Pleaſure, Profit, or Conveniencies, or thinking to repent and avoid Gods indignation, and ſuch kind of thoughts which the Tempter doth ſuggeſt, and his own heart doth receive and improve to the utmoſt advantage, that they ſtand in oppoſition to thoſe conſiderations which the Spirit and Word of God would ſubminiſter: But either he doth not admit them, or they lie ſcattered and looſe to be taken away, and are not lain to heart. When there is a voluntary yielding to Temptations, a glad hearkening to all the Whiſpers of Satan, and a turning back from thoſe good Motions or willing unmindfulneſs of them: When there is a complacency and attendance to the flatteries of ſin, but a diſlike or only a ſudden thought concerning Holineſs, there the Man, may and alſo doth run to all ſort of Wickedneſs; even in all Thought is the principle of action. And therefore it is ſaid, *Let the Wicked Man forſake his way, and the Unrighteous Man his Thoughts*, Iſa. 55. 7. *Which walketh in a way which is not good after their own thoughts*, Iſa. 65. 2. As ſin is ſhameful, ſo the inducements to it are concealed; but there was never an adviſed act of it committed, but thoſe conceits had a greater influence over him then other conſiderations, which either did not appear to him ſo forcible, or were ſlightly, or not thought of at all: and theſe deliberate acts determine the condition of every Man, as to future Happineſs or Miſery: Even that which they commonly alledge for excuſe is adviſed alſo, their Ignorance and Inconſideration, for they might both know and conſider if they would, and are commanded to do, and then they would have acted juſt contrary. Jer. 18. 12.

Hear now O Houſe of Iſrael, *Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?* Ezek. 18. 25. Why ſhould not that be allowed the ſame foregoing thought as your own? Judge of them both alike, and be not wholly taken up with the imagination of your own evil hearts. That gracious promiſe to the Wicked Mans Repentance, *verſ.* 27. is obſervable for the reaſon added, *verſ.* 28. *Becauſe he conſidereth and turneth away from all his Tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die.* As before he had ſome ſeeming reaſon why he did wickedly, ſo having attended and fully weighed what was offered on the other ſide, this makes the ſtream of Action run the right way. *I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto thy Teſtimonies*, Pſal. 119 59. Not with a ſlight fancy or curſory approbation only of one ſide, but with a through and full deliberation, and upon ſuch a debate let any one caſt out

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the commands and proposals of our God who can. *An unwise Man doth not know this, and a brutish Man doth not understand it.* He is guided by Sence, and some little shews of Reason; but then he will not let reason have its perfect work, he will not exert it to the utmost, for then he could not live in doubt and misery all his life long, or miscarry as to the future. If when he is in honour and hath no understanding (for that is the same when not use!) but becomes like the Beasts that perish, being moved only with sensible and present objects; yet he knows why he doth thus wilfully degenerate himself, and he might be otherwise if he would. There is some reason which lies at the bottom, and shoots forth into all Mens Actions; in some it is Carnal, Brutish and kept under; but in others it is pure, rectified and ascending.

So that, would the skilful Workman in the Vineyard dig to the very root and lay dung there, endeavour to perswade from the first Principle of Action, bringing the like reasons against Ignorance, Sluggishness and Sence which he hath for it; even this barren Tree through Gods Blessing might be so cultivated as to bring forth Fruit. *How forcible are right words?* Job. 6. 25. They subminister right thoughts, and those are the original of Action. *Yea, they are the very grace of God,* as may be gathered from *Acts* 20. 32. *Eph.* 4. 29. *Tit.* 2. 11. What is that, but promptings and inclinations in the Soul to Holy and good Things? Now right words do afford these; theSp irit makes them to be understood, warms and enlivens, setting them home to our hearts (for otherwise they may be as a dead letter, an unintelligible flat sound, Riddles or Mysteries) and this as well as the other is from God, from whom all good proceedeth. As Meat and Drink nourisheth the Body, and preserves Health when dressed aright, so the Word of God (both being through his appointed Blessing) do make the Soul grow up in Grace and Knowledge. *Wherefore laying aside all Malice, and all Guile, and Hypocrisies, and Envies, and evil speakings; as new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby,* 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2. If there have been no prejudices before, this hath a mighty effect upon the Soul. It is observed that young Men are more easily perswaded and receptive of good, for they have not those habits of sin which strive against *sound Doctrine,* they have not so long resisted the Grace and call of God as others. If they are not seared with custom, nor hardened with the deceitfulness of sin, they may indeed a little struggle through Lust, yet

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are to be wrought on by the Word. If not utterly to forſake, yet to ſtop a little in their courſe; and if they would attend conſtantly to right exhortation, they would be converted: But conceive him who is a pure Man not corrupted any way, that hath the common principles of Nature; and come to inſtruct him in the ways of God; He will forthwith aſſent to them, he will judge it the moſt reaſonable thing in the World, *That Mortal Man ſhould be ſubject unto the Almighty and everlaſting God*, for a Creature to be governed by his Creator, eſpecially when he ſees it enforced with that demonſtration and power as it may be. *As ſoon as they hear of me, they ſhall obey me*, Pſal. 18. 44. Every unprejudiced mind muſt condemn that wilfull ignorance and ſtubbornneſs, which hinder all that do not come unto God. *The Lord looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth, he faſhioneth their hearts alike*, Pſal. 33. 14, 15. The very frame and making of all Men being alike (none need labour under particular conſtitutions, for they make but little difference and may be overcome) are exactly fitted by our wonderful Creator for thoſe tenders of univerſal Grace and Salvation, he hath given to all not one ſingle Soul excepted: and then the Word is ſufficient as may be ſeen, *Luke* 2. 30, 31. There is nothing wanting but the will of Man to comply with Gods gracious purpoſe, and every one may ſubmit and comply his to that.

If thoſe who take upon them the Miniſtry of the Word were throughly concerned and affected with the good of Souls; If they would be as diligent in the point of everlaſting Happineſs or Miſery to promote the one and hinder the other, as now to do a little kindneſs and prevent a trifling inconvenience, which one Man doth to another, and it is well accepted of. If they are but lovers of themſelves, and did believe the Scriptures, not only by ſaying ſo with the Tongue, but in Reality; let them ſee *Ezek.* 3. 17, 18. *Heb.* 13. 17. Which ſhould oblige them to act accordingly by making it their principal buſineſs to *Turn people from Darkneſs unto Light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* If they would inſiſt earneſtly upon the word of Exhortation, do all things to perſwade, making uſe of the Arguments that God hath given that people might do alſo the things well pleaſing in his ſight. *As the Scriptures are indeed the Word of God*, ſo reſpect is to be had to them accordingly; as the Holy Ghoſt hath conſulted for all times,

Persons and Places, so application is to be made. The reason of things is general, and God is dishonoured in alike instances as those there particularly spoken against. *The Law of God is perfect*, Psal 19. 7. Reaching to all the Thoughts, Words and Actions: his Government extends over the whole Man, and there is no action exempt from his Commandments. *As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak not as pleasing Men, but God which trieth the hearts*, 1 Thes. 2. 4. *Not handling the Word of God deceitfully*, 2 Cor. 4. 2. Which is either done by concealing the cogent arguments, or not pressing them home but superficially. There are further directions from *Acts* 20. *vers.* 20, 26, 27, 28. 2 *Cor.* 10 4, 5. *Heb.* 4. 12. *Isa.* 58. 1. *Jer.* 26. 2. If all this and much more which every Teacher knows, and is convinced to be his Duty, were carefully observed, it would tend more towards the reformation of the World. The Church hath ordained Prayers to be used before the Solemn times of Ordination, *That God would give his Holy Spirit to them that shall be called to serve in the Ministery, that they may set forth his Glory, and set forward the Salvation of all Men*, which words if according to their part they did turn into faithful and diligent endeavours; if they did their utmost according to the power and means given them; more would be done towards it then now is. If they would shew themselves as much concerned, as an Embassadour is in a Negotiation for his Prince, Men are reasonable Creatures, and they might at length yield to the good-will of God *who would have all to be saved.* And though all have not Faith, which is the ground-Work for Spiritual Exhortation to be builded upon; yet they have Judgment and Understanding to consider the probability of those things, which are required to be believed.

But to this great and good Work there are (amongst others) two hindrances, Pride and want of Resolution. If they should use this kind of Preaching, expressed by a* disdainful contemptible Term, they should lose their Reputation and Good-will with the People, and they could not shew their learning.

* Canting and Fanatical.

The Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily, Jer. 20. 8. Said the Prophet in his times: And it may be a Question, Whether it was not by some like saying as that so common in ours. Whatsoever shift and meaning they pretend, yet he who knows the secrets of the heart, is judge himself; Men shew their contempt towards him accordingly as they use his Word or Ser-

Servants, which he reſents as immediately upon himſelf. And therefore all ſhould have a care how they take into their Mouth any Proud or Scornful expreſſion of what relates unto him. Neither ſhould others be diſcouraged by it, if they would learn what their great Maſter ſaith, *John* 7. 18. The Doctor of the Gentiles had as eminent Gifts and Natural Accompliſhments as any now amongſt us, yet he did uſe the *fooliſhneſs of Preaching*; But he ſaith, *the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then Men*, 1 Cor. 1. 26. So in his Word are contained greater Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, then in all humane Writings whatſoever. *There is the Wiſdom of God in a Myſtery, even the hidden Wiſdom which God ordained before the World unto our Glory*, 1 Cor. 2. 7. Which by degrees hath ſhined forth, and ſtill there is more to be ſeen, and ſo will be unto the end of the World. The well is deep, and there is much Water, our Fore-fathers have not drained it, there is ſomething left for us, our Children, and for all Poſterity for evermore. There lie* hid many Inferences and Deductions by which God may be more known to the World, his Works and manifold Wiſdom more diſcovered: All hath not, nor is manifeſted to paſt or preſent Generations, there is left for ſucceeding ones to exerciſe themſelves withall. And had all Learned Men applyed their ſtudy, time and Prayer more cloſely unto this Book of *Divine Revelation*, there had been much more made known then is now amongſt us. Whatſoever things are true, Whatſoever things are honeſt, Whatſoever things are juſt, Whatſoever things are pure, Whatſoever things are lovely, Whatſoever things are of good report, Whatſoever tends to the real happineſs and good of Mankind are here contained, the which cannot be ſaid of that vaſt Multitude of Books in the World taken all together; In them are things falſe, meerly conjectural, impertinent, when here all is true, certain and very proper to the great end of Man.

* Iſa. 45. 15.

Since he is beholden to God for his Being, and for diſcerning thoſe things in himſelf which is properly Knowledge; Where can he better improve that then by the immediate help given in his Word? This being Divine, and for the aſſiſtance of all, Men ſhould not ſet up ſo much as to be called *Rabbi*, when all are Brethren and Fellow-helpers. Where they deliver any thing that neceſſarily flows from the Word and is Truth; there we ought to receive it and be thankful unto God, who hath made it known by ſuch an inſtrument; for it is one of the Raies which comes down from the

Father of Lights, and leads up where we *shall see Light*, Psal. 36. 9. But if it is meer fancy and opinion, if it neither rises from the Fountain of Life nor hath any taste of it, such as gratifies an itching Ear or curious Humour, this is not to be fed principally on, nor to keep off from wholesome food. The goodness of a thing is measured by the end, and what hath the most sublime object, *God and immortality*, and that which conduces to present and future Happiness must necessarily excel that which delights only while it is read, and perishes in the using; for which none is more happy in knowing, or if he doth meet with any benefit, it is small and signifies nothing beyond this vain transitory life: But *the Word of Life*, 1 John 1. 1. should affect us much more then those little and paultry things we now grasp, of which we must in a very little while be bereaved for ever, when those great astonishing things shall be both present and visible, and so remain to Millions of Ages. It tends to those things which always endure, and that is *life indeed*: But whatsoever pertains to this dream, to this dream of a Shadow, which hath no substance, is declining and makes haste; and therefore what consults only for the conveniencies of this, signify not so much in comparison to the other, as a tale that is told, is to the greatest affairs.

It is granted by all that the Bible is the most wise and excellent Book in the World; all Christians acknowledge it to be the very Word of God, and those who have either studied or taught Holy Things refer all to that. Yet here again, the subtle Enemy of Mankind hath found out a way even to deceive the Learned and Disputers of the World, who pick out every thing that is less material, and by their own spinning it out render it unprofitable. Who omit the one thing needful, and seek after every thing they may turn into nice speculation or vain jangling. Every thing of curiosity or doubtful disputation, is sifted out to the utmost, but the great things that belong to our Peace, are not so much made known as they should be. A wise Man begins from the end, and then those important Truths of temporal Peace and eternal Salvation should be perfectly understood, and pressed home to the Consideration of the World before those things which float in the Brain, and not sink into the Heart; which are useless when known, and hinder from fighting the good Fight of Faith, keeping the Commandments of God, and laying hold of eternal Life. The Pillar and Ground of Truth seems to shake

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by thoſe high, tottering and needleſs Superſtructions. Thoſe School-niceties have made to be thought more incredible the things we believe. The Abſurdities and Fopperies of Superſtition, have ſtrangely prejudiced againſt the very Worſhip of God. That Controverſie and Humour of diſputing, have called the Fundamental Truths into queſtion, it being an eaſie inference for ignorant Souls to deny that in which the Contenders are not agreed; and to conclude all is feigned and falſe, becauſe Additions and Corruptions are ſo. That ſquabbling about triſles, hath very much taken off from the Gravity of Religion, and undiſcerning People have thence imagined it a light thing.

An Enemy doth craftily work in the minds of Men; but it is their Sin and Folly, that when they do already or might know this, yet ſtill they are inſtrumental in carrying on his deſign. That wiſe Men ſhould be taken in this Snare, as it is a ſign of his exceeding ſubtlety; ſo of their inconſideration and want of Prudence, for this is another thing then what is commonly called Wiſdom. When thoſe who ſhould turn many to Righteouſneſs, turn aſide to vain jangling; inſtead of inſtructing and exhorting them in the few things to be believed, and many things to be done, they fill the Head with idle Opinions, confound with endleſs Arguings, and not touch upon Practice, but in a general and ſuperficial way, here is a Stratagem to deceive themſelves, and thoſe that hear them. Beſides the word of Truth, which doth clearly convince of this miſtake, they might look into themſelves, attend unto the frame and deſire of their own Soul, for that aſpires after Happineſs and Perfection, having a Complacency in thoſe things which tend to it, and a diſlike of the contrary. It gladly receives all Divine and ſubſtantial Truths to be nouriſhed up by them, and ſhews an Averſation to what doth not mediately or immediately promote this end. As an Evidence of its immortality, it earneſtly deſires after thoſe things which are not to be found here, but have Relation to an endleſs Life. She is for knowing thoſe things which are to be known, that ſhe may fix upon Reſt and bleſſed Expectation, be ſafe as to the doubtful uncertainty, and have ſtrong hopes for better things hereafter. Then ſhe is truly pleaſed when things are done in purſuance to this great end. She craves after knowledge and truth as the Stomach after food, but in Diſputings it is long before attained, and then proves hungry and empty: Whereas the practical and uſe-

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ful kind is both ſutable and ſatisfies the underſtanding. One may run over many Volumes of Controverſie, and yet neither be wiſer nor better; and perhaps he had a more true and clear apprehenſion of the thing in Diſpute, then after he ſees it ſo perplexed and obſcured. The neceſſary Truths explicitly to be believed, are few and plainly revealed; and further in all Myſteries, a Captivating of Reaſon unto the Obedience of Faith is more acceptable in the ſight of God, then curious prying into unſearchable things. One may be ſooner ſaved in a general belief and particular Practice, then by minutely Conteſting about every thing, and a general obſervance of Gods Law; which as it is commonly inculcated and uſed, is next to downright Diſobedience.

In Truth all Men are in an imperfect State, but then they Act only half way of their imperfection, and will not ſtretch that out as they might. Let them wind up to the very top their Principles of Action. Would Man uſe the Powers of Soul according to that degree God hath given and put them forth, he could never miſs of Happineſs. If he would lift up his Eyes, and ſee beyond the common end of things, think of ſomething that may be after this ſhort time, be as deſirous of future Happineſs and Safety, as he is of preſent Good and Conveniency which ſlides away; then he may do what he ſhall judge fit to be done. If we would put the queſtion to our immortal Soul, (as we have regard to the Body, which fades as a Leaf) What will it avail me, to teach or ſtudy this or that thing, when I ſhall put off this Tabernacle? When I muſt for a while live ſeparate from it, and afterwards aſſume it for evermore. If ſuch kind of thoughts were put home to our minds, we might come to the ſame reſolution with the Apoſtle, *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs for the Excellency of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt my Lord*, Phil. 3. 8. To fully underſtand and declare what he hath revealed in the Goſpel, is a knowledge that paſſeth knowledge, more then all wiſe Men of this World could diſcover; and extends further then this place, which takes in all the Good of this preſent time, which is the utmoſt of all great and generous Actions, but then leaves them and reaches forward to Immortality and Glory, to infinitely greater things both in degree and Duration then what are admired, and eagerly ſought after here. So that either he muſt teach what he doth not believe; or is a Fool in that he doth not know nor underſtand, if *he is aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt*. Or thinks

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it a leſſening, which is the higheſt Honour, *That publiſheth Peace, that bringeth good Tidings of Good, that publiſheth Salvation*, Iſa. 52. 7. To acquaint the World what they are ſo impatiently deſirous after, where they may find Reſt to their Souls: How they may live in Hope and comfortable Expectation of that immutable and infallible Promiſe of Eternal, exceeding and perfect Happineſs.

The unbelieving Senſeleſs World are enraged at this, which may be thought Non-ſenſe and Contradiction, yet they are at the means which God hath eſtabliſhed to bring them to obtain it. *The time will come when they will not endure ſound Doctrine, but after their own Luſts ſhall they heap to themſelves Teachers having itching Ears, and they ſhall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and ſhall be turned unto Fables*, 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. Which hath been ſufficiently, and continues to this day to be fulfilled. They do not like any thing that is the very Truth or convinces of Sin, but are for quaint idle Notions, which ſignifie nothing but to pleaſe Men; and not ſo much neither, but as they divert from that which they moſt ought, and are afraid to know. But however, the Teachers ſhould conſider what is written, *Ezek.* 3. 17, 18. *& Chap.* 33. If the Watch-man ſleeps and gives no warning, or if he ſeeth the Enemy coming, and will not ſound the Alarm, becauſe he will not diſturb out of their beloved Sleep, and ſo through his negligence the Enemy kills or takes Captive, we know what all Men think of ſuch unfaithfulneſs, or fooliſh Pity. Themſelves as well as indifferent Perſons would be diſpleaſed thereat, and would not truſt unto him. It may be obſerved of that peculiar manner of Penning this Command. *And what I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all, Watch*, Mark 13. 37. Every particular Perſon is to take diligent Care unto himſelf, beſides thoſe Inſtructers ſet over him; for the Word of Truth ſaith, *Be ſober, be Vigilant, becauſe your Adverſary the Devil as a roaring Lyon walketh about ſeeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet 5. 8. *Satan which deceiveth the whole World is come down unto us*, Rev. 12 9. 12. He uſes all imaginable Tricks to keep People off from the good ſet before them. *When a ſtrong Man armed keepeth his Palace, his Goods are in Peace*, Luke 11. 21. By obſerving his methods of wilful ignorance and carnal ſecurity, his principal Device appears to lead People quietly and undiſturbedly to Hell. Now if thoſe Commanded by God to rouze others out of the Spirit of ſloth and

Heb. 3. 10.

Job 34. 32.

and ſlumber, that they may ſee and avoid the Danger, and not fall into it; But they neglect this for fear of diſpleaſing: If they will not teach knowledge and how to build up a well-grounded Hope, becauſe it will be irkſome to lay open their ſilly Fancies and Deceits, How do theſe in the mean while obſerve what is written, *Acts* 20. 26, 27, 28. If the People love to have it ſo now, they will wiſh otherwiſe hereafter; as Contrariwiſe, who were ſo enraged againſt faithful Teachers, then will have the beſt Opinion of them, and deſire exceedingly, that they had hearkened unto them.

It is one principal Stratagem of the Enemy of mankind to procure a liking unto his ways, and a ſecret Hatred to what is contrary, to hate everlaſting Happineſs, and love Deſtruction, or if that is impoſſible, yet thus they do to the way and means of one and the other. And thereupon he repreſents thoſe as *Troublers of* Iſrael, as *their Enemy who tells them the Truth*, Gal. 4. 16. as *Tormenters of the Inhabitants of the Earth*, Rev. 11. 10. Whereas indeed their own Sins and Enmity through wicked Works, their own deadneſs in Treſpaſſes and Sins which cannot endure to be quickened, is the occaſion of this diſturbance; which alſo would ceaſe, if they were truly repented of and forſaken: But if retained, there Springs up Hatred, unkind uſage to the true Miniſters of the Goſpel, not caring for their Company, ſpeaking Evil of them, fancying them as Tyrants, who are Men of like Paſſions with our ſelves, that are willing to take part with the Condition of mankind, and have a Compaſſionate reſentment of it. But they dare not be unfaithful, and turn againſt him, who hath ſent them. They know and endeavour to appeaſe the living God, They muſt declare whatever he Commands in his Word. They carefully ſeek for Mens Salvation every way, and try the utmoſt to accompliſh it; yet theſe *for their Love have their Adverſaries. And have evil rewarded for good*, Pſal. 109. 4, 5. They meet with Evil intreaty, by lying Stories, *Separating from Company*, Reproaches: They have the imputation of Moroſeneſs, ill Nature, Envy, Pride, Self-conceit, Willingneſs to find fault, and ſuch like. Indeed there is nothing in the World, to which a ſaying may not be affixed; for Malice and uncharitableneſs runs of both ſides as may be ſeen, *Mat.* 11. 18, 19. But to avoid the foreſaid Inconveniences and Temptations, (without which there could be no Tryal) too many have been carried along with the Generality, though

Luke 6. 22, 23.

though it be in Corruption and Wickedneſs. Who cannot endure to recede from common uſe, to moleſt mankind, to ſee others ſhy and afraid of their Converſation, to be ſlandered and ſpoken againſt. The like excuſes (without queſtion) had thoſe four hundred in *Ahabs* time, and the falſe temporizing Teachers in the ſeveral Generations, *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Hoſea*, *Malachy* ſpeak of. Sin and Corruption have always ſince the Word began, had the Majority and Faſhion on its ſide, (even when there was as much of the outward Worſhip and Service of God, as at this day) and then they had the like Plea. This is the great unhappineſs, that God and the World, (though he hath done all things for his part towards a Reconciliation) have not yet been agreed; for as he would come unto them, ſo they fall off from him. *And he ſaw that there was no Man, and wondred that there was no Interceſſour*, Iſa. 59. 16. Very few, or none at all that would ſtand up for the Cauſe and Honour of God. But notwithſtanding as he is moſt eſſentially Good and Righteous, and ſo approves himſelf in all his doings towards the Children of Men, it is better to endeavour rather to pleaſe him, then a wicked Apoſtate World. Eſpecially thoſe ought not to be evil ſurmiſed of, who are to *build up the Old waſte places, to raiſe up the Foundations of many Generation; and thou ſhalt be called the Repairer of the Breach, The reſtorer of Paths to dwell in*, Iſa. 58. 12. Who are purpoſely ſent by him to turn iniquity from *Jacob*, to remove that which hath ſeparated God and us, and have hindred good things from us. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the Tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his Heritage? He retaineth not his Anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in Mercy*, Mic. 7. 18. He might caſt off his People for being Rebellious, puniſh them, and have no more to do with them: But he ſendeth *Prophets, his only begotten Son, Scribes, Wiſe-men* to the ſeveral Generations and places to be reconciled unto him. Now it is evident, they ſhould be faithful in this Work of the Lord, and alſo diſcover what hinders the Accommodation, that it may be taken away, and then the buſineſs is done. It is not to lead People on in a bare outward Profeſſion, or a partial Obſervation of the Law, but to bring them over unto univerſal Obedience. And he who either will not, or dare not do this, is not fit to be a Labourer in the Vineyard. *But unto the wicked God ſaith, What haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou ſhouldſt take my Covenant into thy Mouth?*

1 Kings 22. 6.

Ezek. 22. 30.

Pſal. 50. 16. He had better ſeek any other way for a Livelihood, then to *take the overſight of the Flock of God for filthy lucre*, 1 Pet. 5. 2. and be negligent thereof.

Why a good Nature cannot endure to diſturb, but he muſt when it is to prevent a greater Evil. Who finds fault with a Surgeon that Pricks to let Blood in order to Health, which as it is common, ſo moſt kind and reaſonable. All the irkſomeneſs that can be to further our everlaſting Happineſs, and hinder alike Miſery, allowing for the exceeding Greatneſs thereof, will not amount to ſo much as Men endure, and take it patiently in Caſe of a ſlight temporal Good or Evil. *And I beſeech you Brethren, ſuffer the Word of Exhortation, for I have written a Letter unto you in few words*, Heb. 13. 22. There muſt ſome harſh ſayings now and then drop from the Preachers mouth, if he doth according to the Apoſtolical injunction, *make full Proof of his Miniſtery*, 2 Tim. 4. 4. The Hearers muſt bear them patiently, and do thereafter if they intend to be ſaved. They are to receive as *Eli* did from the Child *Samuel*, *who told him every whit, and hid nothing from him, and he ſaid, It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. Or as *Hezekiah* heard the Prophets ſad Meſſage to his Poſterity, *Good is the Word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken*, Iſa. 39. 8. There is an unwillingneſs to ſpeak of Gods threatnings; The Prophets of Old would fain excuſe themſelves, yet they would not be diſobedient to the Spirit of God, and it was with kindneſs to the People by firſt exhorting them to Repentance to prevent the approaching Ruin. And I do not believe any good Man doth love to tyrannize over the Hearts of others by putting them into fear and dread, but *knowing the terror of the Lord we perſwade Men*, 2 Cor. 5. 11. They do not otherwiſe declare the whole Counſel of God, and they muſt to keep People from falling under the ſeverity thereof; for it would be an odd kind of Mercifulneſs to let them ſlide down into Hell, becauſe we will not before-hand diſturb them a little with the Rumour thereof. Doth any one who forewarns another, ſuch an Evil or Inconvenience will come upon him unleſs he hinders it ſuch a way, therefore meet with unkindneſs? In no wiſe, but on the contrary all thanks and Good-will. There is altogether the like Reaſon, it ſhould be the very ſame as to the things of God and Eternity. Beſides it is not he, but the Word which doth it. No Poſt or Herald can be juſtly blamed, for publiſhing what we Fancy ſevere

Edicts

Edicts and Proclamations, for they are Servants, and must do what their King Commandeth, but if any injury is offered them, He takes it as upon himself, and will punish accordingly. He that is sent a Minister of Christ's Church did never descend into the deep, nor hath he seen any of those dreadful things of the invisible World. He is only to make known and proclaim what he finds in the written Word of God. Who considering his infinite Greatness (more then the Ocean is to a single drop) over those who are but meer Creatures the Work of his hands, hath made righteous Ordinances enforced with suitable Rewards and Punishments, notwithstanding the latter may seem hard and grievous to us. Yet how great soever they are, miserable experience sheweth they are necessary to preserve his Government, and to keep us in Subjection and Obedience. Mark 12. 4, 5, 9.

In Truth we cannot well shew it otherwise, then by a reverent Regard and Conformity to his Word. *No Man hath seen God at any time*, John 1. 18. Nor doth now hear his Voice. In what manner then shall he shew himself subject to this infinite Being? Let him shew forth never so much will-Worship, Humility or neglecting of the Body, think to gratifie with something of his own; (as corrupt Nature is too fond of its own Inventions) yet if he hath not regard to the prescribed Pattern, all is esteemed *as cutting off a Dogs neck*, the Reason is added, *Yea they have chosen their own ways.* If he offers up never so much, or seeks to please him, that signifies nothing, *For all these things have been saith the Lord: But to this Man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word.* If God should shake the Heavens and the Earth, the most stout Inhabitants here would tremble, and they could not do otherwise: But now he sanctifies the Lord and makes him his dread, who shews himself awful and pliant at hearing, or reading of his revealed Will. If he did roar from *Mount Zion*, or utter his Voice from the Battlements of Heaven, then the People would presently cry out after their wonted manner, *All that the Lord hath spoken we will do:* But when the noise is gone and the fear is over, they would forget that, and return to their own ways. Now it remains written in a Book that it may not be once, but for ever, and there is the still Voice of the Spirit which would set it home to our Hearts, and by this way he is pleased to try our Obedience. And indeed how can it be better shewn forth then by sincere doing, according to that Isa. 66. 2, 3.

which we ſurely believe to be the very mind of God, what he would have us to do.

Yet alas! What ſtrugling and conteſting is there againſt this? A manifeſt Token of that diſobedience which lies hid in the heart of Man, and puts it ſelf forth by Cavil, Diſtinguiſhing, Evaſion, or ſetting themſelves againſt thoſe who keep cloſe to it. All this proceeds from that Root of Enmity and unwillingneſs to comply therewith. *He that is of God, heareth Gods words*, John 8. 47. *When ye received the word of God, ye received it not as the word of Men, but (as it is in Truth) the word of God which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe*, 1 Theſ. 2. 13. All is but vain and deceitful words, which have not Relation to this Rule, either by neceſſary Conſequence or Connexion. God is Truth, and *his word is Truth*, John 17.17. and if we ſay we love God, we muſt alſo in the Apoſtles Phraſe, *receive the love of the Truth that we may be ſaved*, 2 Theſ. 2. 10. That People may not be left at uncertainty to know what it is, it may be diſcerned by the Touch-ſtone; and alſo it hath a full Conviction over the Heart and Conſcience. Notwithſtanding the Shifts and Tricks, the Diſputing or crafty Eluding, yet there doth remain a firm perſwaſion in the mind, which cannot be got off, And let all have a Care how they oppoſe or ſeek to Prevaricate that. When the Spirit of the mind ſuggeſts to the Man, *That is the very Truth*, it is exceeding dangerous to reſiſt or do deſpite to that.

Should the Almighty have erected his Throne viſible on Earth, People might be over-awed with the Senſe of his Majeſty and Greatneſs: Or elſe be invited by that Splendour and Glory, to run unto him as now they do to Kings and great Perſonages. So they might, and would yield a feigned Submiſſion and love unto him. *But the Kingdom of God is within you*, Luke 17. 21. He hath eſtabliſhed his Government in the Hearts of Men. The Law he hath given is in a Book which may be read or heard to lay up in the Heart, and do accordingly. Such of the People as ſhall be willing and obedient, will ſhew themſelves this way: and thoſe who refuſe and Rebel, will do ſo likewiſe. Who now live by Faith, and approve their Subjection unto his revealed Will, would do ſo much more if they had a ſight of him, or hear his Voice, as they ſhall have both to their exceeding and endleſs Comfort: But to them, who now will not believe nor hearken to his Word, when he hath made himſelf known after this manner,

Pſal. 107. 11.

ner, neither would they do it from the ground of the heart, but might be frightened or led by a mercenary Spirit if they had seen his power and Glory, as they may to their own confusion and anguish of mind.

Why do the Heathen rage? And why do the People imagine a vain thing, Psal. 2. 1. None but the *Tyrants of Old* or a mad *Julian* flies openly in the face of Heaven; there may be found who doth say in his heart, Tush God I care not for thee, for there do lie strange imaginations within; But he doth not lift up his eyes and say so with a loud Voice, unless he is a Fool or Frantick: Ignorant people have an impatiency at his Government, whereas they might know this would not be *for their hurt*, but exceeding benefit, unless by restlessness and provocation they draw the severity of it upon themselves. *Be still, and know that I am God*, Psal. 46. 10. There is no removing the Government from his shoulders, nor getting themselves from under it: How much better had they be quiet and obedient when he will love and reward them for being so, then toss to and fro to no pupose, but to gaul themselves the more? Accordingly they are to shew themselves unto his Embassadors, who come with the Word of Reconciliation. *Now then we are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead be reconciled unto God*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Jer. 25. 6.

Paul *as his manner was reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging that Christ must needs have suffered*, Acts 17. 2, 3. Who is the great Mediator, all that he did and said was to bring people unto God; and so should every one do in a point like necessary as that was to the unbelieving Jews. This person did not try to please his Auditory, but doth oppose the greatest fault and sin in them as here, and so *before* Felix *he reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance and Judgment to come* Acts 24. 25. All which have Foundation in the Word, but the phrase *reasoned* is observable, and always to be imitated in subordination to that; The Scriptures do contain general commands and rules of Holy Life, to which those who are *Contentious and obey not the Truth*, Rom. 2. 8. can frame distinctions and find out evasions to deceive and keep quiet their own Souls; but the particular handling and application of them, convinces of sin and turns to Righteousness. The Holy Ghost hath provided for all Generations, Countries and Languages, and Penned them after this manner for those who in their several Places and Ages should be in-

intruſted therewith the more fully to expound and apply the ſame, ſo as to teach the way of Salvation perfectly and truly. It is the proper Office of our underſtanding to collect one thing from another; Whatſoever is rightly inferred from the Word of God, is the Word of God, and will be fulfilled; for nothing but truth can follow from truth. There cannot be uſed too much care and circumſpection concerning this Ordinance of Preaching to manage it aright, becauſe ſo much depends thereon for the preſent Good and Univerſal Salvation of Mankind, which is to be revealed and determined in a ſhort time; for the World will quickly be at end with us living, and how many Generations more may ſucceed, God knows, but we may underſtand and truſt unto what he ſaith and promiſes, *And they that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever. Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed*, Dan. 12. 3, 4.

Of Prayer. When we hear or read the Word, God ſpeakes unto us; but when we make Prayers and Supplications with Thanskgiving, we ſpeak unto him. This is the intercourſe between God and Man. *That God ſhould hearken unto the voice of a Man*, Joſh. 10. 14. ſeems wonderful, if we have but thoſe juſt and raiſed thoughts of the Deity, and the true knowledge of our ſelves. However, the fooliſh proud unbeliever thinks ſcorn of this Holy Ordinance, yet if himſelf had but ſuch a ſight of *the Lord ſitting upon his Throne* as *Iſaiah* had, Chap. 6. or *Dan.* 7. 9, 10. he would conclude it no uncomely thing, but moſt bounden duty for ſuch poor Creatures as Men and Women to kneel before him, yea, if they were like Worms crawling in the Duſt, lying on the Ground with ſhame and confuſion of Face, yet this would not be ſubmiſſion enough to ſuch a Mighty Being. It is ſeemly for the Body to bend and lie proſtrate before him that made it, and millions of the ſame kind. *What is Man that thou art mindful of him?* Pſal. 8. 4. Even he who is moſt great in his own or the Worlds opinion, who is lifted up with Pride to the Higheſt; yet this ſame Perſon if he had Faith and Knowledge, would take it in extreme Anguiſh if the Lord ſhould caſt him off or not mind him, as we are foretold will be the condition of ſome, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *Mark* 8. 38. Thoſe who now aſpire after greatneſs, abhorring contempt and low things will meet with intolerable Vexation to be rejected from

from the great things of his Kingdom. There are ſome now a days, who if they ſhould ſee one in that poſture as *Elias* was *upon the top of* Carmel *caſt down upon the Earth, and he put his face between his knees*, 1 Kings 18. 42. would think him either to be Mad or a pitiful Sneak, not knowing the Object of his Worſhip and Adoration. Notwithſtanding thoſe *High* but ſilly *Imaginations of Men*; yet themſelves judge that the more an ordinary ſubject is in favour with his Prince, and hath acceſs unto him though in never ſo ſubmiſſive a manner, it is more for his honour. And then as much as God is greater then Man, ſo muſt it be more dignity to be allowed approaching unto him. If we conſider it throughly, *Should not his Excellency make us afraid?* There is awe and horrour to addreſs immediately to ſo Glorious a God; and therefore it is neceſſary to have expreſs invitation from him firſt, as (Bleſſed be his Glorious Name for ever) we have *Deut.* 4. 19. *Pſal.* 50. 15. *Jer.* 29. 13. and throughout his whole Book. But more eſpecially in theſe laſt days *by Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, in whom we have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence by the faith of him*, Eph. 3. 11, 12. We are required *to ask in his Name*, John 15. 16, & 16. 23. Who alſo through his tranſcendent greatneſs expreſſed, *Phil.* 2. 6. *Heb.* 1. 3. might keep us off, yet he humbleth himſelf to take upon him our fleſh, to become as one of us, and more familiar to our Nature. Such a Mediator and interceſſour was expedient for us, who by his relation to God might prevail with him, and ſeeing he was pleaſed to become as one of our Brethren, we may the more preſume to addreſs unto, and through him. *Seeing then that we have a great high Prieſt that is paſſed into the Heavens, Jeſus the Son of God* (a double exhortation follows) *let us hold faſt our profeſſion, Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*, Heb. 4. 16. 2 Cor. 10. 5.

For what Nation is there ſo great, who hath God ſo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? Deut. 4. 7. Is he a God ſometimes near, and ſometimes afar off? Or can we with our Prayers bring him down from above? No, God abideth ſtill the ſame and equally near, he continually fills Heaven and Earth with his preſence; but the Word and Prayer makes the Sence of him near upon our Minds. *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in Truth. He will fulfill the deſire of them that fear him*, Pſal. 145. 18, 19. Which is the great-

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eſt and moſt ineſtimable privilege that ever did or can belong to the Sons of Men; It raiſes a dread and love for the Divine Majeſty; It aſtoniſhes with his infinite condeſcention to admit thereof. To fall low on our knees before his Foot-ſtool, is an higher advancement then to converſe with Angels, or talk familiarly with the greateſt Monarch on Earth. And ſo it would more appear, if God did keep us at a diſtance, as our Superiours according to the fleſh do through imperfection, for if they ſhould make their company common, it would have Contempt inſtead of Eſtimation; but the more one knows of God, it raiſes more admiration and delight. How ſtrange is it! that Men who believe God is, who is ſo Great and Glorious as his viſible Works do manifeſt, and may be more underſtood by his inviſible things; yet ſhould think any thing low or mean which hath relation to him or his Worſhip. *God ſtandeth in the Congregation of the Mighty, he judgeth among Gods*, Pſal. 82. 1. Yet many do refuſe to bend the knee when Prayers are offered unto him, when if the ſame Perſons were to deliver a Petition unto the Kings of the Earth would kneel before them. Such are Proud and Ignorant who perform Worſhip with careleſſneſs or irreverent geſture.

But what is to be ſaid of the natural ungodly Man? who ſlights that relation which God doth vouchſafe to continue this way towards us. *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable, and I have loved thee*, Iſa. 43. 4. And ſo it will illuſtriouſly appear, when we who know him by Faith, ſhall after this life come to have the fruition of his glorious God-head. Should we be ſeparated from any affinity to him; had we nothing divine within us; or when we are in honour, will deface his Image, and provoke him to diſown us with, *I never knew you*, Mat. 7. 23. We ſhould be but pitiful forelorn Creatures at preſent, as thoſe will be who work iniquity and tranſgreſs againſt him. *They ſhall go forth and look upon the Carkaſes of the Men that have tranſgreſſed againſt me, and they ſhall be an abhorring unto all Fleſh*, Iſa. 66. 24. Obſerve the ſlighting kind of phraſe the Holy Ghoſt makes uſe of, that ſuch little, deſpicable and vile Beings ſhould behave themſelves contemptuous and ſtu' born againſt a Moſt Excellent and Glorious Majeſty. If he who will at laſt reveal himſelf, were not now out of our ſight, there could be no tryal of this, whether Men would do ſo or not; as at preſent there is, and therefore they do it. Had we not a ſpiritual and immortal Soul, which hath a near ſimilitude

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of the Divine Nature; how mean and frail ſhould we be? To be juſt enlivened with naked and vile bodies, ſubject to all the miſeries of Nature, liable for a prey to the ſtronger Beaſts and every Creature might inſult over us, which alſo they would if they had the ſame corrupt Seeds of Evil, for we ſhould be more deſtitute then they, having no reaſon to arm and ſecure our ſelves. And then we could not ſo much as get the dominion over them, much leſs lift up our ſelves againſt the Great Creator of all things. Now mark the ſtrange degeneracy of Humane Nature, let the whole World ſtand amazed at it; *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth: For the Lord hath ſpoken. I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me. The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Crib, but* Iſrael *doth not know, my people doth not conſider*, Iſa. 1. 2, 3. That power which was given to know and glorifie him, is turned to contemn and diſhonour him. We are but meer Creatures, the very work of his hands, all our good and excellency we receive from him, What leaſt part of us did we make our ſelves? *Shall the Ax boaſt himſelf againſt him that heweth therewith? Or ſhall the Saw magnifie it ſelf againſt him that ſhaketh it? as if the Rod ſhould ſhake it ſelf againſt them that liſt it up, or as if the ſtaff ſhould lift up it ſelf as if it were no wood*, Iſa. 10. 15. There is a vain perſwaſion in Man that he is his own, that he is independent, exalted, and beholden to nothing; though in his body are all things to humble and contradict this Opinion, Infancy, Childhood, continued Weakneſs, Mortality; Yet he ſtill bears in mind what the Serpent told his Fore-fathers, *Ye ſhall be as Gods*, Gen. 3. 5. In a worſe ſence of ſelf-exiſting: What lofty thoughts are in this poor Creature? A certain token there is ſomething more in him then that receptacle of Fleſh we ſee; and whence came that? But by creation from God. And ſhould that juſt now come forth into Being, ſtart up and diſown its maker? Which hath received a capacity to imagine high things, ſhould that preſently do ſo againſt him from whom it was derived? But wilt thou know, O vain Man, unleſs he had made thee in this exalted State, thou couldſt not if thou wouldſt never ſo fain thus magnifie thy ſelf againſt him; Becauſe he made thee to ſerve him, and gave thee power to do it freely, what an horrible thing is it that any ſhould inſtantly turn, and refuſe ſubjection unto him?

I know the heart of the Reader will rise at this; Who ever arrives to such strange kind of Wickedness, and most base ingratitude? In plain terms all those do who make no Prayer unto God, for they shew no submission unto and dependance on him. *Have the Workers of Iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread, they have not called upon God*, Psal. 53. 4. Isa. 64. 7. A fit preceeding Question, for the other is consequent to it; and then this ignorance, the not calling on him is refusing Obedience unto him, or a secret disowning of their dependance on him, for all, High and Low, People as well as Priest are strictly commanded in sundry places of Scripture to do both. It signifies little to say with the Mouth according to the common form, if one thinks otherwise in the heart, God knows that; or if he doth really Judge, God is to be obeyed and Worshipped, it is to be shewed forth by outward Action. As in the publick Assemblies, * family-Worship, which is rather to be done though it be taken notice of, and perhaps laughed at by our ungodly Neighbours; for then we do it not to get praise, but out of a sence of Duty: *Sayings and the custom of others are not so much to be regarded, but every one in his House ought to shew forth a visible subjection unto God before the World.* * Jer. 10. 25.

By Prayer we acknowledge Gods Authority over us, we confess our selves Servants, Subjects, and Children that live upon his good Providence, and that all things come from him. We believe on him whom we have not seen; We give credit to his gracious promises, and stand in aw of his threatnings, and thereupon most of our Petitions are founded. We are in our proper Office when we lift up our Soul, and our Desire is unto him. God is most pleased in actual Obedience, working of Righteousness, and bringing forth fruits of Well-doing; yet by Prayer there is a tendency and inclination in the Soul to them, there is a begging help and willing mind to do according to the power given us, there is an asking forgiveness for what we have done amiss, and to perform better Obedience for the time to come. What can God require more of his poor imperfect Creatures, then to do according to their Ability, and to help out their infirmities by humbly craving a Pardon for them, and sincere desires that they were better? He is Faithful and Good, knowing our frailty and condition. *We have an High Priest that is touched with the feeling of our Infirmities*, he hath purchased a Salvation and Reward if we do according to them, his Righteousness and perfect Obedience supply our defects.

Hear

Hear what he ſaith, and how he affirmeth it; *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*, John 16. 23. Now the deſirable thing is Heaven and Happineſs, but there is no leaping into it without going in the way; for this is Gods immutable decree, and nothing can be granted contrary to that, which is by Obedience and Holineſs, the contrary is ſin: And therefore we are to beg forgiveneſs of that, and to ask for the Holy Spirit by which we may be enabled to live according to the Will of God in all things. Provided, when that prompts to do ſuch a thing, we be ſure to comply with it, and ſo when we have dictates to leave another thing undone; for God will not be ſo put off, that when he inclines towards the doing of his Will and we do it not, but only pray that we may do it. If thy Servant ſhould come from time to time for aid and aſſiſtance to do ſuch a thing for thee, and thou granteſt him his requeſt, yet he never doth that which he pretends he would if he had ſuch help, wouldſt thou not ſay he did mock and ſlight thee? The beginning of a thing is a deſire towards it; when that is, then if there is power, it will be certainly done. So that if there is an unfeigned deſire to keep Gods Commandments, this will ſeek out for ſtrength and ability to do ſo; *Ask and it ſhall be given you, ſeek and ye ſhall find, knock and it ſhall be opened unto you*, Mat. 7. 7. The command and promiſe is not given only to Diſciples or choſen Ones, *for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that ſeeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it ſhall be opened*, verſ. 8. Here Man will fly back again and ſay he cannot ask, But yet he can *ask Bread, Fiſh*, or any good thing of another; and why then will he not ask good things of our Father which is in Heaven? Hath he a real deſire to be ſaved? Why, there is a willingneſs in all Men to this Bleſſed end. But here is the difference between the Fool and Wiſe Man, the firſt would have it without the means, the latter knows it is impoſſible, and therefore muſt have both or neither. Indeed there is an aukwardneſs againſt the way to Heaven, a rumour of the Sons of *Anak*, ſome ſtrange difficulty next to impoſſibility. The Man is frightened and gives back, and therefore it is neceſſary for him to have a true report abſtracted from the lies and falſe Imaginations, to have all the encouragement that can be given, to be urged with the abſolute neceſſity, and that it is an exceeding Good-land; all that Men can poſſibly do is little enough to get poſſeſſion there. They do already ſubmit

to more hardſhip in getting thoſe things which are not the ten thouſandth part ſo valuable; ſuch like perſwaſions by degrees change the mans mind, for he did not hear or not know of as much before; this conquers natural averſation, and puts him upon a firm adviſed reſolution, and the next thing is to get ability to go through with it.

In the work of Mans Salvation the Word and Preaching are before Prayer, for how ſhall they pray for what they have not known, or for what they have not heard? And therefore it would be a good Method in the Education of Children to inſtruct them with ſome principles according as their tender Years will bear, before they are taught to ſay Prayers by Rote, or to make them ſomewhat underſtand what they ſay. In thoſe of riper years Knowledge and Reaſon ſhould go before Action, or elſe it will be blind and ſignifie nothing; Some having conſtantly uſed a courſe of Devotion, confine themſelves barely to that, which is but a means to ſomewhat more, unto which they ſhould ſtill preſs toward. Prayer is properly * deſire (which argues a neceſſity of attention, for we cannot deſire thoſe things which we do not mind) and all forms are that we may live an Obedient and Holy Life; Now it would be ſtrange if we ſhould pretend to deſire that which we neither do, nor endeavour after.

* Mark 11. 24.

To imagine God is pleaſed with the bare ſaying of Words, when they are neither minded nor underſtood, it may be more truly thought, that he likes better the Chirping of Birds, then ſuch Service from reaſonable Creatures. There hath been a deal of Chaunting forth of Maſs, and Toning out of Prayers. But how well they have been ſung or ſpoken forth, we muſt have unworthy Thoughts of the Godhead, if we ſuppoſe him to be delighted with the meer outward noiſe, or reciting only ſuch Words before him. Which of our ſelves conſidering throughly can approve of it? They muſt be *Fools who offer ſuch Sacrifice*, or think he will accept of it; for he that gave to Man knowledge, ſhall not he know? When that can find, and offer a better Worſhip, will he not expect it? Thoſe who have been blind Worſhippers of this ſort go haſtily in their way, *For they conſider not that they do evil. Be not raſh with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be haſty to utter any thing before God: For God is in Heaven and thou upon Earth: Therefore let thy Words be few*, Eccleſ. 5. 1, 2. In thoſe private Books of Devotion, which were deſigned for help of the ignorant,

norant, they too often ſhew themſelves more ignorantly, for many ſay over the very Words, not conſidering the Senſe, and ſay unto God, It is ſo with them, when it is not; or Confeſſing what they have not been Guilty of, or making Purpoſes and Reſolutions which they never intend afterwards, or ſaying ſeveral things which do not belong to them in Truth: But ſo far hath ignorance and blind Cuſtom proceeded, that they think it enough if the Work is done, ſo much read over, the meaning is the leaſt they conſider of. *I will pray with the Spirit, I will pray with the Underſtanding alſo*, 1 Cor. 14. 15. Saith the Apoſtle; but they pray only with the Lips or the Ear. *This People draw near me with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but have removed their Heart far from me*, Iſa. 29. 13. This is not ſo much intended againſt that infirmity of wandring thoughts in Prayer, but when of ſet purpoſe they keep their Heart to themſelves, not giving it to God, but imagine to put him off with ſuch outward Service. What prodigious Folly is this, to think to deceive God, whom every one that believes muſt alſo conclude, that *all things are naked and open in his ſight*, Heb. 4. 13. And every one that ſpies out a deceit intended to be offered unto him, doth reject it with Abomination. Neither the Calves of the Lips, nor the various inclinations of the Body will ſerve without Conſent and Subjection of the Soul. It is not bowing before the moſt High God, nor falling proſtrate with our Face to the ground, for ſuch a Submiſſion may be feigned, and the Body may be bending and creeping, when the Heart in the mean while is lifted up and exalted; our ſelves are not pleaſed with a Crawling poſture, where we think it is not ſincere: But He above knoweth all things. The true Worſhip of God doth not conſiſt in turning the Face ſuch a way, or being very nice in all Punctilios of outward poſture, though theſe are decent if they expreſs the very Senſe of the mind, of intire Submiſſion unto the whole Will of God, a through perſwaſion, *Thou haſt beſet me behind and before*, Pſal. 139. 5. Not to think him more in one place then another. But if thoſe externals ſhould be ſeparated from that *Worſhip in Spirit and in Truth*, John 4. 23, 24. which the High Prieſt of our Profeſſion hath ſaid, ſhould be in theſe days, they do much more diſpleaſe then are acceptable unto God. Such Men worſhip they know not what, or they will not know; for had they right apprehenſions they could never imagine, that the bare outward performan-

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ces will be received by that God with whom we have to do. If any one of these should look here, they will still go on in their own way, and so let them, but take heed that at last they be not deceived of their Expectation and Reward, let them see, *Hag.* 1. 5, 7, 8, 9. They are only put in mind how their Service may be so ordered, that God may accept it, and be glorified therein. In things pertaining to God, we know but little without he had revealed himself, and what he doth require: So they must take Counsel of his Word how to please him, if they would partake of his Goodness and not be disappointed at last. Which if they had done in Sincerity and Truth, they would never have been so abominably mistaken, as a great part of the Christian World hath been, and is to this day in Matters pertaining to his Worship and Service.

The Scripture in many places doth shew the true Nature of Prayer, *Psal.* 10. 17. *Psal.* 73. 28. *Deut.* 4. 29. *Psal.* 119. 145. *Jer.* 29. 12, 13. 1 *Sam.* 1. 13, 15. *Mat.* 7. 7. *Rom.* 8. 26. *Mat.* 18. 19. & 21, 22. *Luke* 11. 18. *Eph.* 6. 18. *Phil.* 4. 6. *Jam.* 1. 5, 6, 7. *Jam.* 5. 16. 17. 1 *Pet.* 4. 7. *Heb.* 10. 21, 22. Which set it forth as the earnest desire of the Soul. When we do ask and praise God for his benefits, this is a reasonable Service, being agreeable to what he requires, and the utmost next to obeying his Will, which we can render unto him.

The Sacrifice of the wicked is an Abomination unto the Lord: But the Prayer of the upright is his delight, *Prov.* 15. 8. It is stiled by another Name, for such do not really Pray; Can he beg Grace to forsake Sin, which he doth not dislike? Or for the Holy Spirit and good things, when he hath not the least desire, but aversion to them? He may pray for a general Admission into the Heavenly Kingdom, and to be preserved from that of darkness; but in vain, for the things cannot be separated which God hath joyned together: Those Ordinances, *Mat.* 13. 42, 43. *Mat.* 25. 46. *John* 5. 29. are ratified and unalterable. Though besides their own Prayers, *Noah*, *Job* and *Daniel*, and all the righteous Men that ever were, should pour out their Supplications before the Throne of Almighty God, for the Salvation of wicked and unregenerate Men, yet it would not be granted. The Case of *Esau* is lamentable, and stands for a warning to all Generations, of those who now for the Pleasures of Sin sell their Birth-right and Title to Heaven; *For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have*

have inherited the Bleſſing he was rejected, for he found no place of Repentance, though he ſought it carefully with Tears, Heb. 12. 17. When all the Wicked ſhall come to be fully ſenſible of what they have done, as they will when their ſhort time is ended, they would be ſaved, and Happy for ever as other People: Nay their willingneſs to be Happy, was the Cauſe of their Tranſgreſſion and this Remedileſs miſtake, which then they might have turned the right way, and they will take up doleful Crys and Lamentations, that God would receive them unto Mercy, when he will not hear, for his Words are gone out to the contrary; The only Remedy is to be warned of this in time, as they were and might have taken warning, as all that are now living may. If they would have the Bleſſing, they muſt have it in his way, or not at all, which is as *Peter* told the *Jews*, and in them all mankind, paſt, preſent and to come; *God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus Chriſt, ſent him to Bleſs you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities*, Acts 3. 26.

Obedience gives Title to the Promiſes, which are now apprehended by Faith, until there be a certain performance of them. And though God hath Promiſed ſuch things already, yet ſtill we are to pray for them, for the Promiſes are to them that ask, *Mat.* 7. 7, 8. *Mat.* 18. 19, 20. *Luke* 18. *Mark* 11. 24. *John* 16. 23. They are to be had upon means and Conditions which are to be done before, and Prayer helps as to them, and are effectual when they are alſo uſed.

From the Converſion of the *Eunuch*, Acts 8. of *Saul* Acts 9. of *Cornelius*, Acts 10. and what is ſaid, *Acts* 11. 14. *Acts* 15. 7. It appears that God works by outward means the Preaching of the Goſpel. And therefore our Prayers for the Converſion of the Heathen World, or of any one elſe are not likely to be granted, unleſs the like means be uſed towards the Accompliſhment thereof. And that may be done by the pure reformed Church, all one as it hath been attempted by corrupt and cruel Popiſh Emiſſaries. If the words of eternal Life be ſimply and ſincerely declared unto them, as the Apoſtles and Primitive Teachers did to us, who were in darkneſs: How know we but *the time of the Promiſe draws nigh*, that the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* may come in? Let not thoſe whom the Lord ſhall move by his Spirit to this bleſſed Work, be Rebellious unto it; but go forth accordingly. *I am ſought of them, that asked not for me: I am found of them that ſought me not.* Iſa. 65. 1. when it is through unavoidable ignorance,

Pſal. 138. 4.

Acts 7. 17.

rance, who never heard ſo much before. But not of thoſe who wilfully put him off, or refuſe the means of Grace and Salvation.

God is ſtill Sovereign and a moſt free Giver, he may ſcatter the Mercies of his left hand, or ſuffer thoſe to come at them, who do not ſeek unto him: Yet it is but a ſmall thing to have their portion in this life, though it is preſent and viſible, and the low Spirited World eſteems every thing that is ſo; ſtill it is little, for it comes exceeding ſhort of a true Happineſs, which ſignifies little when had, and nothing when it is over, and by being too often abuſed, it tends to the hurt of the owners, bringing upon them a greater condemnation. If all thoſe in paſt Generations, or who have been with us, and are juſt now departed hence, would ſtand up and tell us what avails all the Worldly proſperity they have had: If thoſe who are now in the midſt of it would ſpeak their minds ſincerely, that the days paſt are vaniſht away as nothing, if they would freely declare the Irkſomeneſs and Satiety of the preſent; if they would acknowledge that doubtful Expectation, how it ſhall be with them after theſe things are ended, and they haſte not knowing how ſoon; if all this were conſidered, there is no ſuch Cauſe why they ſhould *ſpeak loftily againſt Heaven*, or ſay in their Hearts, How doth God give them theſe things? They are proud and diſobedient againſt him, who in his Providence either ordered or permitted them to have what they make matter and occaſion of being ſo. But however, becauſe they have theſe things without or with asking, they will ſeek for no more. O that they would know for their Good, as otherwiſe they ſhall be ſenſible to their Coſt and Diſappointment, that there are others they now ſet at naught ten thouſand times more valuable, then thoſe they now ſo boaſt themſelves in.

Pſal. 140. 8.

Even thoſe the Apoſtle makes mention of, and is thankful for, *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual Bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt*, Eph. 1. 3. Which are reſerved to be fully had there, and for ever to remain. It is the greateſt Happineſs here below to have thoſe things, which are in order to the Attainment and making ſure of them. Of which we have ſometimes a little Glimpſe and foretaſte, and even they exceed all the Pleaſures of this World. So it is reaſonable to pray earneſtly for the common Salvation, to pour out our Soul in Supplication, and ſet our hands to do accordingly; for Prayer

ſignifies

ſignifies nothing without Endeavour: There muſt be a Begging, Compliance, yea, and working with the Grace of God, or otherwiſe it is received in vain. God doth not beſtow his ſpiritual and eternal Mercies, his Jewels of real Worth and Excellency to thoſe who do not ſeek unto him for them: Who think them not worth asking for, may go without them, and make much of their lying Vanities, which both deceive and ſlip away, leaving the Poſſeſſours in deſpair and miſery; *When the Gift of God is eternal Life*, and he alone is Happy, who both prays and uſes the means to receive it.

The great prejudice that Fleſh and Blood which is dull and unbelieving hath againſt this Ordinance, becauſe it thinks there is no preſent and viſible benefit thereof. Did the Exhalation of our Prayers fall down again in a ſhower of Bleſſings which might be ſeen or had, then more would be offered up, and alſo with diligence and earneſtneſs. But now whether we pray for temporal Mercies, or againſt Evils, yet all things happen alike to all, and it may be juſt the very ſame as if none had been. If it is concerning ſpiritual and future Good and Evil, why theſe are not ſeen, and they may be all but Fancies, and imaginations; or God may no more mind as to them, then he ſeems to do the things before us: So our Prayer may appear to be vain, the ſending forth of words and breath into the Air. Hab. 1. 2.

This mighty Stumbling block doth quite keep off the ungodly Man from making any Prayer at all, for he ſees it is the ſame with him that ſacrifices, and him that Sacrificeth not. Even he doth ſometimes try, and if he finds no preſent Good of it, he leaves off and is confirmed more in ungodlineſs. The ſteps of the good Man do alſo well nigh ſlip: He hath Temptations to deſiſt, and ſome little queſtioning within, whether theſe things are ſo, for he ſees no difference in outward things between him, who goeth into the Sanctuary, and who doth not. A wiſe Providence ordereth all things in Heaven and Earth, yet they go on in the wonted manner. *Thou that heareſt Prayer*, ſeemeſt as if thou heardeſt it not. A thouſand kind of thoughts may ariſe in our minds: Whereas it is our infirmity and ignorance of the ways of God: It is our Sin and Provocation that makes him ſo far from us, and from hearing the Voice of our Supplication, and moves him to have no more to do with us, unleſs his Goodneſs, Condeſcention and Truth, and alſo ſome choſen People did preſerve his Pro-

tection and Care over the Inhabitants of the Earth. *So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a Beast before thee*, Psal. 73. 22. I did no more understand of the ways of God towards the Children of Men, then those dumb Creatures do apprehend his doings. Besides original Blindness, Sin casts a Cloud over the understanding, deprives of the knowledge of the things of God, that *seeing they may see, and yet not perceive*, and *hearing they may hear, and not understand*, have a general understanding, but not attain to the Divine Sense of things. *For what Man knoweth the things of Man, save the Spirit of Man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 11. Even this which hath been the occasion of so much unbelief and falling away, may be clearly understood out of the Scriptures, his revealed Will. *Seek ye out of the Book of the Lord and read*, Isa. 34. 16. If Men did according to Duty in their doubts, Difficulties and Temptations resort to that, this would satisfie; but the cunning of Satan keeps them off, and they would apprehend the things of God, any other way then his Book, by which only they are to be known.

The Foundation of all Religion is Faith, *The just shall live by his Faith*, Hab. 2. 4. Whatever he sees and observes abroad he resolves all upon this Principle, and sticks firm to that. This is the first thing insisted upon and required. It is observable, though God hath done all things to beget *a more full assurance of Faith*, yet there is nothing so very evident, as takes off from all manner of doubt, for this would exclude and destroy Faith, which is the first Decree and Ordinance of God. And therefore he *hides himself*, and his doings so far as to exercise that: Notwithstanding all the Arguments and Demonstrations that are pretended, we must at length resolve it upon that of the Apostle, *Through Faith we understand, that the Worlds were framed by the word of God*, Heb. 11. 3. We know that God is by natural Reason and perfect Demonstration; but for things done heretofore, and things to come, there we believe him true who hath said and promised, which is the Office of Faith. Let no Man lay any other Foundation, or seek to undermine this which God hath laid, for this standeth sure, being much more evident and credible to the Hearts of Men, then all those intricate Discourses are to those which understand them, but insignificant to the People, and Difficulties still arise to the learned. Reason is very serviceable in its due place of Subordi-

Job 23. 8, 9.

nation,

nation, but it rather confounds when it ſets up equal, and would ſeek to overthrow Faith; for this firſt begins all Diſcourſe and inferences as to things Divine, for we muſt believe ſome to be fixed before we can reaſon from one thing to another. When all is done there muſt be Faith. To maintain and keep this up, all Gods doings may be obſerved to be wiſely ordered. His letting of things go on in a natural and orderly way may exerciſe the belief of a Providence, for ſome may be tempted to aſcribe them unto Time and Chance. That many more of his things are inviſible, ſome may thence incline to doubt of and deny them. But Faith receives them as revealed? And Reaſon will come into aſſiſtance, that it may not be thought incridible; for it is evident there are ſome things which are not ſeen, as a *Sound* or *Smell*, yet theſe are perceived by the *Ear* and *Noſe*: And ſo we have as great a certainty of them as the things we ſee. God is inviſible, and ſo are the things of this Kingdom, yet they are as evident to our own Souls, as Carnal things are to Bodily Senſes. But ſtill we cannot remove all Difficulty, We muſt at laſt reſort and cleave unto this, *I believe in God and the Revelation, he hath made of himſelf in Scripture.* Men would fain climb up to certain Evidence, then they would ſerve God, and be ſuch as he would have them: But thank you for nothing, this is purely Selfiſh and Mercenary: Thoſe who will not do it by the way God hath preſcribed of Faith and waiting for him, may let it alone, he cares not for their Services. It is ſo eſtabliſhed that Men may believe, and yet room may be left for infidelity; that all may uſe the means to come unto Faith, and yet ſome by too curious and wrong inquiry, others by Careleſsneſs and neglect may be ſtill unbelievers.

And therefore Scripture ſeems to have Penned Myſterious, and perplex in many Places, that the Tryal of our Faith might be had even as to that, how every Tittle is true, and ſhall be fulfilled, though ſome things may appear next to impoſſible, contrary and falſe by daily Experience. *Have Faith in God, for verily I ſay unto you, that whoſoever ſhall ſay to this Mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou caſt into the Sea, and ſhall not doubt in his Heart, but ſhall believe that thoſe things he ſaith ſhall come to paſs, he ſhall have whatſoever he ſaith. Therefore I ſay unto you, what things ſoever ye deſire, when ye pray believe that ye receive them, and ye ſhall have them*, Mark 11. 22, 23, 24. yet himſelf, who ſaid this, did certainly deſire with Earneſtneſs. *If it be poſſible let this Cup paſs from me.* But himſelf

ſelf practiſed what before he taught us, *Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven, Nevertheleſs not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Mat. 26. 39. So we may at this preſent time pray for ſomething againſt, or not conſiſtent with the Will of God, and therefore it is not granted. We know the Will of God by what he hath revealed: In theſe laſt days under the Diſpenſation of his Son, there is little ſaid of temporal things. And therefore we have no Promiſe of Gift or deliverance, as to the outward Good or Evil of this preſent time. *Ye ask, and receive not, becauſe ye ask amiſs, that ye may conſume it upon your Luſts*, Jam 4 3. Even what may be occaſion of Sin, Pride, Vanity, Diſ-eſteem or Forgetfulneſs of God; And therefore he in Goodneſs denies it. *And this is the Confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will he heareth us*, 1 John 5. 14. *Whatſoever we ask we receive of him, becauſe we keep his Commandments, and do theſe things that are pleaſing in his ſight*, 1 John 3. 22. This Qualification is too often wanting, for ſome make many Prayers and give no Obedience, or an half one with reſerves, and ſo their Petitions are not granted as is implyed from *Deut.* 4. 29. *Iſa.* 59. 2. *Jer.* 29. 13. Again, *The effectual fervent Prayer of the righteous Man availeth much*, Jam. 5. 16. but that doth not which is Lazy and Negligent. And then want of *importunity*, Luke 18. Such Cauſes may be aſſigned out of the Word, why there is not ſo great return to our Prayers as may be expected: And whatever People think the fault is only in themſelves, they have not thoſe neceſſary Qualifications, or do not order their Prayers according to the Rule. Gods word is Truth, but Men do not obey, and are not guided by it. The Promiſe is certain, *Mat.* 7. 7. *Rom.* 10. 13. but they do not perform the Conditions; and to excuſe themſelves would imagine there might be falſhood in that which came by Inſpiration from him.

If mankind would remember where they are, that is, they are going in the way, and therefore ſhould be contented with the Patriarchs requeſt of *Bread to eat and Raiment to put on*, Gen. 28. 20. Let none fear, he that doth Gods Will, and uſeth the appointed means ſhall be aſſured of this. That Petition, *Give us our daily Bread*, Chriſt never put in vain, neither is his Promiſe, *Mat.* 6. 33. come to an utter end. More then this we have no where Licenſe to ask, neither hath God paſſed his word to beſtow. We are apt to grudge at ſuch a ſmall Pittance as we would think it; But do we not believe what is to come? Do we conſider wherefore this is

deſired?

desired? For contentment and delight; Now God can, and also doth add as much of this into a moderate competency as in all plenty and superfluity. In truth happiness doth not consist in these things, which serve only for the body the worse part of us, and then it passeth away instantly, and the pleasure is the same whether had or not had. The desire of the obedient Soul is (if he hath sufficient for Life and Godliness) not that God would give him more, but bless and sanctifie that which he hath; and then he will perceive as good a relish as others do from their abundance. To the truth of this many thousands in a lower condition can bear Witness; God puts joy and gladness into their hearts with what he affords them, as others have in their full increase of Corn and Wine.

As for Praying against Temporal Evils or Judgments, whether National or Private, there is little said in the Gospel, the Motto whereof may be, *For we walk by Faith, and not by sight.* Here again is a tryal of it, for they seem to happen at all peradventure, and are the effect of natural causes; some have been hereupon tempted to deny immediate Judgments sent by God, or think that *affliction springs from the dust*, the ill constitution of that part of us, or the common Malice and Injury of Men. Indeed God hath permitted and ordered Nature to go in her way, and doth seldom contradict that: But here it comes to pass, that the Ax is lifted up above the Carpenter, what the Workman doth is imputed to the dead instrument, that cannot move or do any thing without the hand that sets it a going. Nature doth all things according to the common voice of the generality, which proceeds from unbelief or sullenness: Whereas they might know this nature must be from some one else, who makes it to act in so regular and constant a way. Nature of it self is blind, and could never bring forth things in such an exact orderly manner, unless directed by the Wisdom above; It is turned and winded, and whence should this be, but from the first mover of all things? The infidels, when they are beaten out of every hold and shelter, will run for refuge underground, their last resort is to the workings of Nature; but these turn against them, and prove contrary to what they would have, so they had better now, then be forced to it at the last day, to *move out of their holes like Worms of the Earth, they shall be afraid of the Lord their God, and fear because of thee*, Mic. 7. 17. They had better acknowledge that

now

now unto His Glory, and to obtain his Pardon, what they will at last be compelled to do to his Justice and Truth, but their own Shame and Confusion of Face. Even hard-hearted *Pharoah* understood more then they, for he did not cry out it was the Wind that brought the Locusts, he knew the hand that smote him. *The Lord brought an East-wind, and the East-wind brought the Locusts, and the Lord turned a mighty strong West-wind which turned away the Locusts*, Exod. 10. 13, 16, 19. He might have magnified and made himself more visible by bringing them a strange way, but he was pleased to make use of a second cause as he doth generally in all his doings towards the Children of Men, whether in sending Judgment or Mercy; As afterwards in the *Manna* and *Quails*, Psal. 78. 23, 24, 26, 27. Unless a Man is low and short in his
Hos. 6. 3. reasoning, he must at last reduce all to the first cause of things; Though one acts by subordinate instruments, yet still he is at free liberty to act or not act; and again after this or that manner. God hath the disposal of all second causes, and what we esteem accident is wise design or permission, which he can either hinder or intend as he pleases, so his providence is still the same. Who brings on evil by its next cause, can also remove it; He who suffered them, can also take away the impediments; as he doth shut the Womb, so he doth open it; *For the Pillars of the Earth are the Lords, and he hath set the World upon them*, 1 Sam. 2. 8. All things are his, and then certainly he can turn and dispose them howsoever he will: Though he hath now appointed things to go on in such a manner, yet he sits at the Helm and manages the whole course of Nature according to his good pleasure and Sovereignty. But because it goes on most commonly in the same way there do arise doubts, when it is thus wisely contrived, that all who consider throughly, must believe a Providence for things here below; which again continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation, this exercises the belief thereof. We may pray against outward evils, that God would be pleased to remove what he doth send. *Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos 3. 6. *Come let us return to the Lord, he hath torn and he will heal us*, Hos. 6. 1. That want of universal reformation is many times a cause he doth not remove publick or private Calamities; sometimes he doth, but not presently to try our faith and trust in him, when we know the Rod, and who hath appointed it, tho' we saw no hand lay it on or will take it off, *Although the Fig-tree*

doth

doth not Bloſſom, Hab. 3. 17. There is no outward appearance of help or means, yet God can furniſh and put in mind of them in due time. As to this our Prayers are often heard and granted, he ſtirs up the heart and affections of Men towards us, makes the Bones that were broken to rejoyce, heals our Diſeaſes and Sores by directing to the uſe of fit Remedies, and firſt putting that vertue in them. All this ſeems to be alike to them, who pray not, which is to be imputed to Gods gracious Nature, to try the Faith of his Children, to manifeſt their unbelief and unthankfulneſs; If they have eſcaped Worldly danger and evil, yet worſe things wait for them, from which they will not be delivered unleſs they both pray and alſo uſe the means to avoid them. But that there is a real and ſenſible difference between the Righteous and the Wicked as to outward good and evil may be known by this, that the one hath a more ſweet enjoyment and comfort in them both, which no wicked Man hath or can pretend unto. So that as to the preſent time and leſs material things, notwithſtanding what prophane ſinners ſay, or others think, *It is not vain to ſerve God*, Mal. 14. *and they have profit who pray unto him*, Job 21. 15.

But much more doth it avail to procure inward and Spiritual good, to hinder from temptation and evil; It doth help in things which pertain to preſent Peace and future Happineſs, for preparation and joyful expectation to a perfect and conſummate Glory, and to get ſafe from the evils of the other World. Now we come to the Man, which is within: for outward good and evil is light and but for a Moment, the one faintly delights and vaniſhes away, the other vexes a little and will have an end; But what hath relation to Eternal Happineſs and Miſery, What is begun here imperfectly, and will in a little time be fully made manifeſt in a perfect and irreverſible ſtate of one or the other; Here if our moſt fervent and devout Prayers to God will do any ſervice to obtain the good, and eſcape the evil ſet before us, they muſt be neceſſary and highly important. We have all the aſſurance in the World if any thing which is ſpiritual and inward, is ſomewhat more then fancy and imagination, that theſe things are ſo. As certainly as our Souls are ſomething more then meer Breath, ſo that inward ſence of Religion (which is properly Religion as the other is the Man) is real and ſomething beſides imagination or outward talk. It is certain, the fruits of its Obedience and good works do appear without and are ſeen; but the Root and Princi-

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ple is within, *Conſcience towards God*: And again it is evident that many do act only by this Principle contrary to their preſent eaſe and conveniency in the World. The work of Religion is real and the effect thereof, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee*, Iſa. 26. 3. Now indeed this cannot be ſo perfectly demonſtrated to the natural ungodly Man, but the experience is ſo well known to the happy poſſeſſors of it, that they eſteem it before all wordly advantages whatſoever. It is ſo in univerſally good and ſincere People, but then it is ſurmiſed, fond hopes and expectations will cauſe complacency of Spirit; Whereas herein may be obſerved the difference between the reality of the one and falſhood of the other, for the firſt will bear all Tryal and Examination, and ſtill ſhew forth reaſonable and certain grounds of truſt and confidence, but the other cannot do this; he muſt go on in his way, not enduring the touch-ſtone; a convincing Argument, the firſt is true, the other falſe and counterfeit.

Beſides there is a ſenſible growth in Grace and Knowledge, a more confirmed purpoſe of Obedience, a mortification of ſin, an aſſurance of Gods favour and the well grounded hope of Eternal Life, That converſation in Heaven and antepaſts of it, that rejoycing and ſtrengthening in the inward Man; All theſe are as truly perceived as others find exultancy in their honour and eſteem in the World, in thoſe vain projects which are doubtful and come to nothing; When there is the promiſe and word of God for the reality of thoſe afore ſpoken of. It is but a ſmall pleaſure which reſults from the graſping and enjoyment of temporal things, but that conceit which goes before, thoſe promiſes of good and the propoſed ſatisfaction whilſt but in purſuit, are equally if not more delightful then when the thing is actually, had and preſent. And yet the firſt is a meer fantaſtick happineſs (as none of this World is much better) which yet is ſenſible and pleaſing. It is an inviſible, but real delight, though it relates to viſible and corporeal things: Every ſcheme of ſatisfaction Men raiſe to themſelves in this World, they find the firſt apprehenſion thereof good and pleaſant, which is wholly within. Hereupon they act further, expoſing themſelves to pain and trouble, and perhaps this is all they will have, for they may be diſappointed at laſt, either by miſſing the thing they aim at, or propoſing to themſelves more contentment then realy it hath. Let the ignorant and brutiſh laugh at inward

good

good and ſatisfaction, yet the outward deceitful vanities of this World make a ſhew of this, or the Man would not ſeek after them. Even the pleaſures of ſence afford moſt delight to the imagination before hand, for when they touch, they are unſatisfactory and inſtantly periſh.

If the things we ſee, handle or hear, are more eſpecially perceived from within, How much more may we conclude of the things that pertain to Gods Kingdom, which are purely Spiritual and Inviſible, which are exactly fitted to the reaſonable Soul, that theſe alſo are moſt real and certain. What the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14, 15. is true, but though they may *ſeem fooliſhneſs to him*, yet let him not judge them to be vain or falſe, if the natural man might be ſomewhat recovered out of his State, for by reaſon alone he may judge there is ſomething in what is here treated of.

God's faithful People are fully ſatisfied in their own Hearts of the truth of theſe things, and may be offended that they are offered for proof, which are ſo very plain and evident to them, but ſome are to be *ſpoken unto as Carnal*, 1 Cor. 3. 1. to lead them on to ſpiritual things. But for the confirmation of the Chriſtians Faith, we may thus manifeſtly conclude; if the firſt fruits are true, then is the lump alſo: If the earneſt and pledge is certain, ſo are the greater things to come: If the Scriptures are fulfilled in the Way, as that is known by experience, they will be ſo in the end: By what God hath already given and done for us, he is faithfull that hath promiſed, he makes good his word in this life, and will do ſo in that which is to come; this ſupports in the time of faith and waiting: As the Patriarchs received the promiſes of the Meſſias, and did deſire his days, but did not ſee them: So our Fore-fathers ſaw him in the fleſh, we do now in his Grace and Revelation, and have known and heard all thoſe things to be exactly fulfilled of him written in the Book of *Moſes*, *Prophets* and *Pſalms*; It remains that we who have received of his Grace, expect but a little longer till we ſhall be fully partakers of his Glory, when *we ſhall ever be with the Lord*, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. We now read, hear, believe and have earneſt expectation of theſe things, but they ſhall at length be openly revealed, and for ever remain preſent to us. All the mean acts are already done and fulfilled, as they were foretold and promiſed; and therefore we may well believe and be aſſured, that what God hath begun, brought on ſo far, he will perform

Heb. 11. 13.

1 Kings 8. 56.

form to the utmoſt; *For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10. 37. All things happen juſt as they are ſpoken of in Scripture, in this life of Tryal, Faith and abſence from the Lord, and then certainly here is ſufficient demonſtration. *Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed*, John 20. 29. As to the things heretofore, ſo further on, Bleſſed are they that believe, for there ſhall be a certain performance of thoſe things which are told concerning the day of recompence, of ſeeing God, and for ever being with him. *Your life is hid with Chriſt in God: when Chriſt who is our life ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in Glory*, Col. 3. 3, 4. The phraſe of being *hid* is remarkable, for it cannot be made ſo evident to others: However, it is as ſenſible to thoſe who have the life of Jeſus manifeſted in them, as any inward act of Religion is to thoſe who have the leaſt apprehenſion of it.

Indeed all the other is but the Shell, for the ſubſtance of Religion is inward and inviſible; which is as certain and apparent to the mind, as outward things are to the Senſes. If that may be deceived by fancies and imaginations, ſo may they by deluſions: But whatever is truth approving it ſelf to the underſtanding and rational part of Man (for this is a diſtinct thing from the fancy) of this there is as much aſſurance as what we either ſee or hear. And ſtill if the Soul is deluded in its proper objects, ſo the outward and ſenſitive faculties are in theirs; and then we may as well ſay our ſelves are but ſhadows and apparitions, the World and all things therein are but a dream and painted ſhew, there is not the leaſt ſubſtance in it, which would be a monſtrous abſurdity and impoſſibility. If there is any thing real, Religion is ſo likewiſe: As God is who made all things, and by whom they ſubſiſt; ſo he made us alſo to know, glorifie and obey him, hath given us power to do many things in relation to him, which is our proper and only end; If that which gives life, can give aſſurance; If that is ſatisfied of things of leſſer moment, and grounds a full perſwaſion as to them; much more may we give heed to that full acquieſcence of Spirit it hath as to things divine. As ſure as God hath revealed himſelf to mankind in Scripture, and they have a through acknowledgement and abundant conviction within them that it is ſo, if they would not wickedly ſtruggle againſt or ſeek to ſtifle it, which is to do violence and act contrary to the beſt of their knowledge and underſtanding, witneſſing for the certainty of theſe things, which deſervedly

ſervedly renders liable to Gods Wrath and Indignation. But if they deal ſincerely, and ſeek after God with the beſt powers they have, which they are required to do, and then they ſhall find what will demonſtrate to them beyond all contradiction, that all things indeed are ſo which are ſpoken of in the Word.

And then to prove that ſincere and devout Prayers are beneficial, would be all one as to labour by argument to evince that the Sun ſhines at mid-day. They perceive thoſe returns, which Strangers and Hypocrites may call folly and Enthuſiaſm: Indeed there are ſome who in a ſtorm of Affliction take ſhelter in the Sanctuary, or out of a ſudden heat and willingneſs to be ſaved run to the Houſe of Prayer: And if they do not preſently find eaſe, or laſting inclinations to good afterwards, they are ſtill diſquieted and continue in the ſame mind, making an haſty concluſion that it is the ſame thing, whether they make Prayers or not. Perhaps the firſt ſort enquire unto God to be rid of the trouble that lies upon them after they have uſed pleaſures, Company, worldly Means, and tryed every thing beſides for help; and when they will not do, God is the laſt reſort whom before they put of in their proſperity, of ſuch it it is Written, *Jer.* 2. 27, 28. *Judge* 10. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Let others examine themſelves, whether there be not remaining iniquities which ſeperate between their God and them. Do they turn from every evil way, and come with a firm reſolution to be his Servants? Then they muſt patiently expect his time. It is a common error, and proceeds from being unacquainted with the ways of God, to think that things are done on a ſudden; the Graces of Faith, Truſt, Reſignation, and waiting are to be exerciſed. There are to be found examples in Scripture of thoſe who did many things, who rejoyced and brought forth fruit for a ſeaſon, but miſcarried at laſt; for the promiſe is to patient continuance in well doing and perſeverance unto the end. Thoſe ſudden fits towards good proceed from a ſelfiſh Principle, and want of due conſideration. They would do all things for themſelves, and nothing for God: they are willing to be happy, but not upon his terms, and he diſcerning the ſecrets of their heart, it being not right towards him ſuffers them to go on in their own way, and ſo they either grow weary or turn aſide. Their purpoſes not being built upon the ſure and laſting foundation of *Faith* and *Love* ſink and fall upon every Wind of temptation; and having not

throughly considered how much they must do to be saved, and when they find it to be more then they first thought, they start back and go no further. They would have the time of labour short, but the reward be given quickly: God will not alter his doings to gratifie any one.

We must live by Faith in this World, all the days of our appointed time we are to wait till our change come. What is promised at present, is granted now: according to our Faith so it is, and so will be as to what shall be revealed hereafter; There is encouragement and sufficient certainty that our Breath is not spent in vain. The Incense after it is gone off from the Altar presently vanishes out of sight, and after those breathings of the Soul are passed forth the door of the lips they may seem to be lost and gone, but they ascend up unto Heaven to the *Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of Saints*, Rev. 5. 8. Some descend again into invisible but sensible Blessings, working for us an exceeding great reward against the time we shall be admitted there. *For this shall every one that is Godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found*, Psal. 32. 6.

Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the Heavens, Lam. 3. 41. There is one thing destroys the Nature and Efficacy of Prayer, *viz.* Want of Attention, wandring Thoughts, that heavy yawning and negligent way of devotion; now this cannot be utterly hindred, for the flesh is weak, corruption clogs, a Multitude of outward and sensible objects do press into the mind, The necessary affairs of life are too apt to intermingle with holy things; Yet this being offensive and unbecoming the Majesty of God, Those who love and fear him, will endeavour what they can against it. Look up unto Heaven, and think unto whom ye speak, who dwelleth on High and filleth all things, this will stir up *Reverence and Godly fear*: With how great awe and seriousness do the *Seraphims* praise him, *Isa.* 6. 3. And canst thou pour out words before him with sluggishness and negligence of Soul? Look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who in the days of his flesh offered up strong crying and tears; And why mayst thou not strive to do so likewise? Call to mind thy past acts of Supplication, how happy it would be for thee if they had been performed in an attentive earnest manner; let this quicken thee the next time to give heed to the present, and use diligence for the future, that no opportunity may slip from thee without *effectual fervent Prayer*.

er. Say every Sentence with all thy might, for there is no Praying in the Grave whither thou art going. If thou canſt mind one, why not another? So a Third, and thus go through thy whole Devotion. Suppoſe thou wert to die to Night, and make thy Supplications all one, as thou wouldſt do then. And though it may be ten thouſand to one whither this is thy Caſe, yet certainly this is and of us all, that we muſt ere long appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, to receive for the Good or Evil we have done, ſo it is near the ſame thing. Reflect on the gliding Nature of time, and as that paſſeth on, try to make it as it were ſtand ſtill by the moſt intenſe Prayer, and other Good Works; for all other things fail and periſh, when theſe are done in Order to what ſhall endure for ever. Do not grudge at the loſs of time, for can it be laid out to better purpoſe? Canſt thou with more Comfort give up thy Account for this precious Talent, then ſo many hours expended in the Worſhip and Service of God? It will turn to more advantage then worldly Pleaſure or Profit, Trade and Employment, idle Company or Recreations, for all theſe with the living are juſt ready to be done away, as they are already with thoſe that are gone before. But for what time is improved in the means of Grace and a Life anſwerable to them, it tends unto immortal Glory. There is more then a thouſand years recompence for every minutes Work here on Earth: For what doſt thou come before the moſt High God? Are they not *The things that belong to thy Peace*, of greater Concern then Houſes or Lands? *No Man that warreth, entangleth himſelf with the Affairs of this Life, that he may pleaſe him who hath choſen him to be a Souldier*, 2 Tim. 2. 4. It is not ſaid he doth not meddle at all, but doth not involve, plunge himſelf in, for this is a mighty hindrance to the things of God. There can be no Prayer made unto him whilſt the deſire ſticks here below; and again take it off, and the Man can lift it up to God, his Lot and Portion. And therefore let him drive away all Earthly Cares, or leave them behind when he goes up to Sacrifice. If Prayers are offered up in a right manner, they will ſtand in more ſtead then getting an Eſtate and labouring to be Rich. We ſhould take as much Care in them as others do in their propoſed Ends, which quickly come to nothing. The more one is abſtracted from the World and preſent things, he is better enabled for the Worſhip of God. In private he may ſhut

his

his Door, endeavouring to keep out all Divertiſements. In publick, look to himſelf, not obſerving others Devotions, and neglect his own: Every Perſon ſhall receive the Reward of his own Labour. What others do, what is that to thee? Mind thy Self.

The World imagine this to be flat, dull and tedious; they ſpeak as they find, for it is ſo where the Heart is unrenewed and under the Power of any Sin. Who are alienated, and Enemies through wicked Works, it is aukward to draw nigh unto God: It is violent and contrary to lift up their Souls unto a pure and Holy Being. But it is not ſo with them who are cleanſed from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, who hate every falſe way, and in ſome meaſure are Holy as he is Holy, and therefore he is ſutable to their Deſires. Thoſe fervours of Spirit, that Joy of the inward Man, are Riddles and Myſteries to thoſe that paſs by, who have only a little taſte by lip Labour or bodily Service, but not throughly acquainted what true Prayer is. The Morning and Evening oblation are acceptable to the obedient and devout, as their Meat and Drink; yea, more, as the Gratification of the Soul doth exceed that of the Body. It is an exceeding ſatisfaction to propoſe a right and ſure end to ones ſelf, and then all the mediate Acts towards this yield preſent Comfort, and a bleſſed Expectation. *The great end of mankind is God*, He is worthy of all they can do for him, of their utmoſt endeavour to pleaſe and approve themſelves unto him; *For thou Lord art good and ready to forgive: And plenteous in Mercy unto all them that call upon thee*, Pſal. 86. 5. There is a rejoycing, when we do any thing according to Gods Will, a certain Argument that we were made and ſent here for this purpoſe only. *The Sun rejoyceth as a ſtrong Man to run his Race*, Pſal. 19. 5. So it is in all created Beings, We are the diſobedient part of the World. Thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven, he left for a ſtanding Petition, who likewiſe told us, *Joy ſhall be in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth*, Luke 15. 7. When a ſingle Perſon among ſuch a Rebellious and froward Generation, as the Inhabitants of the Earth are, do begin to do it. The whole Happineſs of the World and things therein, is to obey the Law of their great Creator: Every thing in Relation to him is delightful. When we beg good things of him, we are aſſured, he giveth liberally and upbraideth not. Prayer

conduces

conduces to our preſent Eſtabliſhment and Security; it begins and helps towards the true, Perfect and never ending Happineſs.

Of Praiſe.

For Mercies received the juſt Conſequent is to return thanks. Now of God are all things, *From whom every good and perfect Gift proceedeth*, Jam. 1. 17. there ariſes up towards him the Duty of *Praiſe and Thanksgiving*. We at firſt judge it a moſt reaſonable thing, to give the Lord the Honour due unto his Name, and our ſelves have a ſtrong reſentment of Benefits: But then Corruption begins to work, and turn the Stream of our Gratitude unto ſubordinate and leſſer Objects. We are very thankful to the Inſtrument or next hand that doth convey unto us, but unmindful of the Author and Fountain from whence they all ſpring. Thoſe Bleſſings that are become conſtant and common, which ſhould moſt ſet forth the bounty of the great Benefactor, we wrongfully eſteem our due and deſert; and then whatſoever is more, this is looked upon as an Addition to what was our own, and is taken kindly; Whereas in this we might have ſeen his Providence, that either furthered or could have hindred this good thing from us: And at laſt if we provoke him by unthankfulneſs, he can turn it into a Curſe inſtead of a Bleſſing.

When thou haſt eaten and art full, then ſhalt thou bleſs the Lord thy God, for the good Land which he hath given thee, Deut. 8 10. He firſt created the Earth with Vertue to bring forth Fruits, and hath given unto Men that power and underſtanding to Till it accordingly; Who gave them Life and Being to receive theſe things, and hath allotted to them ſeverally as he will. Yet theſe being viſible and neareſt are too often by ignorant unbelievers, more thanked then the Author of all things. The Conduit which of it ſelf is dry, is more had in Admiration, then the Fountain which ſends forth the Water. God expreſſes himſelf ſeverely againſt Idolatry. How many Cautions are there leaſt we Worſhip the Sun, Moon and Stars, which are uſeful to mankind; but he made them ſo. He is a jealous God, and would not that they ſhould draw off the leaſt Glory from their Creator. Much leſs ſhould earthen Veſſels come in for ſharers of his Glory, Eſpecially when his only begotten Son diſclaims it, *John* 8.50. and ſo do holy Men, *1 Theſ.* 2. 6. *1 Pet.* 4. 11. *Mark* 5. 19. *Acts* 3. 12. *Acts* 12. 23. *Acts* 14. 15. Even of temporal and outward Mercies, we have an immediate aſcribing them unto Almighty God, the Patriarch

Patriarch *Jacob* presently ascends above all second Causes. *The God which fed me all my Life long unto this day*, Gen. 48. 15. He doth not say his Estate or fruitful Seasons, the Good-will of such Friends, Money, Food; but he refers them all higher. In the New Testament he is stiled the *Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. He gives Gifts unto his Children, whether immediately as spiritual Blessings, which are not in the power of any to give or take away; And therefore to him in a more peculiar manner belongs all the Glory. But for the temporal good things he sends by the hands of another we are to give our most humble and hearty thanks to the Great Master, but in no wise to thank the Servant more then the Master, nor to exclude the Sense and acknowledgment of the Great Lord over all.

O that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men, which is thrice repeated, *Psal.* 107. To speak forth his Goodness is that which God delights in. This Duty is expressed in a publick and outward manner, *Make known his Deeds among the People, talk ye of all his wondrous Works*, Psal. 105. 1, 2. *My tongue praiseth thee with joyful Lips*, Psal. 63. 5. *Make the Voice of his praise to be heard*, Psal. 66. 8. Examples of this are *Luke* 1. 64. *Luke* 17. 15. *Rev.* 5. 12. The Holy Ghost by this signifying, that we should *speak out* when we praise God, and not do it inwardly in a whispering manner, or in a Corner, as if we were ashamed of what we did. It is not said thus concerning Prayer, for there the inward reserved way is rather commended, *Mat.* 6. & 1 *Sam.* 1. 13. But the great things God hath done for us, they should be shewed forth amongst Men. There is no mention in Scripture of giving thanks only in secret, but *in the Assembly of the upright, and in the Congregation*, Psal. 111. 1. And also among others, that they may be brought over to partake of the Goodness of the Lord. Nothing but Praise breaths forth through every Verse of the Book of *Psalms*, or something which may be matter and occasion thereof. It is inculcated throughout the Old and New Testament, *This People have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my praise*, Isa. 43. 21. The Earth hath he given to the Children of Men, Grass and Herbs are for Beasts, and both for our use. And what were we made for, but to Confess openly the Glory and Greatness of our Creator, to see and consider this vast Fabrick of the World, to admire and magnifie that God who made it. *But ye*

Isa. 12. 4, 5.

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are a peculiar People that you ſhould ſhew forth the Praiſes of him, who hath called you out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light, 1 Pet. 2. 9. Here is yet more matter of Praiſe, and alſo to encourage free Obedience; for to live only for a ſhort time would not be altogether ſo much, though God oweth nothing to his Creatures, and as he brought them out of nothing, ſo he could turn them to nothing again; But he hath given moſt full aſſurance, that we ſhall have and ſee greater things then theſe. *The Bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World*, John 6. 33. That Revelation to mankind by Chriſt Jeſus, all thoſe unſpeakable Mercies contained in him, The means of Grace and hope of Glory, do juſtly require ſuch abundant Exaltation of our God, that our Soul and all within us cannot worthily Praiſe him. This would take up all our Life-time here, as it will the whole length of Eternity. As for Preaching, Prayer, and the Sacrament they ſhall ceaſe, when we ſhall perfectly know, and be obedient unto him; when we ſhall have the full Accompliſhment of our deſires; When we ſhall ſee him Face to Face, whom we now remember, but *Praiſe abideth to eternal Ages*. I will be bold to ſay, When we ſhall be inveſted with this exceeding and enduring Happineſs, our thanks will not be ſo much; now is the only time of Faith and Thanksgiving, This is the only day to magnifie our God, for giving unto us exceeding great and precious Promiſes.

Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and in the Earth? Pſal. 113. 5, 6. He who made, doth now preſerve, govern and diſpoſe of them according to the good Pleaſure of his Will. So we are to acknowledge and offer up thanks for all his Mercies, and wonderful Works towards us: Whether in Relation to Soul or Body, this Life or that to come. It is an imperfection of ours to judge any Mercies to be ſmall, for God gives nothing unworthy of his Majeſty, but the littleneſs is in our ſelves, his Mercies are fitted to our mean Capacity. Knowledge and Inſtruction are not imparted to Horſe or Mule, neither are we to expect the underſtanding of an Angel, for our preſent Condition could not bear it, *According as his Divine Power hath given unto us all things that pertain to Life and Godlineſs*, 2 Pet. 1. 3. Even what belongs to this dying Life and vile Body, yet there is ſuch a neceſſity and Connexion of them in order to greater, that they call for our moſt humble and hearty thanks. That prepares for

an immortal Being, and we have all our Treasure in this earthen Vessel, which also is to be changed and made Glorious and Incorruptible. In our Body every Bone, Artery and Vein is Subservient to the whole; so the manifold Blessings of God are for our present and eternal Good. *Giving thanks always for all things, unto God and the Father, and in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Eph 5.20.

This is a most just and reasonable Command, notwithstanding it may seem odd and precise in the sight of the World when done as to common things. But if it were not thus esteemed, the Duty would not be so Excellent; for that more appears when one is contented to suffer shame, and be accounted strange
Zech. 3.8. and ridiculous only for the sake of God. It seems uncouth through disuse, and because it is not generally Practised: The want whereof is through Pride and Sullenness, disobedience and ungodliness, ignorance and unbelief, which in these corrupt times bear sway over the greater part of mankind: But if these wicked hindrances were removed, there would be giving of thanks at all times, and in all places from the greatest to the least. *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master*, Mal. 1.6. Themselves would not like to have a kindness and good turn requited with slight, Forgetfulness and Ingratitude. But they do not perceive the Goodness and Mercies of God, as they do other things which come from one another, which they bring, take, Or get
Deut. 8. 18. by their own Power. Let any one that imagines so, stand forth and answer. Who made him to be a Man, and gave him Power to do whatsoever he doth? What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, Why art thou not thankful? One cause is (what is of all Irreligion and Wickedness) that thou hast these things nevertheless. *God is kind to the unthankful and evil*, Luke 6.35. (observe who is ranked first) and therefore they remain so. If God should make known himself and his Works a little more then he hath done already, there would be no Tryal of any ones Submission or Thankfulness. Because now he would prove whether Men will bless his Holy Name, therefore they refuse. But let such know, they may have their good things and Consolation, and hence pass to his Judgment Seat, of whom they have been unmindful and sullen. *Hear ye, and give Ear, be not Proud, for the Lord hath spoken, Give Glory to the Lord your God, before he cause Darkness, and before your Feet stumble*

ſtumble upon the dark Mountains, Jer. 13. 15, 16. If I may uſe ſuch a familiar Phraſe, Do but behave your ſelves Civil towards God in this World, that you may meet him with Comfort in the next.

Let us offer the Sacrifice of Praiſe to God continually, that is the Fruit of our Lips, giving thanks to his Name, Heb. 13. 15. This is no hard thing. It is ſo ſmall a Duty, and under the Majeſty and Greatneſs of God, that we need an expreſs Revelation, to aſſure that he accepts thereof. If himſelf had not ſaid, *Whoſo offereth Praiſe glorifieth me*, Pſal. 50. 23. A conſidering Perſon could not believe it, for he might eaſily think thus; There is more diſtance in reſpect of Superiority between God and Man, as between Man and Flies: Now if they ſhould buz forth in Commendation of us, What Glory would it be? God is gracious and infinite in Condeſcention, *If he doth ſet his Heart upon Man*, Job 34. 14. That he doth at all look upon our low and mean Services. He is Glorified in all his Works, and this with ordering our Converſation aright, is the utmoſt we can do. *Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenced to him again?* Rom. 11. 35. But he hath firſt given unto us, and expects the return of good words to our Maker. Only acknowledge and Confeſs with the mouth what we have received, and have Good-will towards him, and ſpeak out of Things truly as they are. Lord, Who would not Praiſe and magnifie thee? Foraſmuch as among all the Beings of the World, there is none like unto thee, thou art the Maker of all, and they from thee. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory and Honour, and Power, for thou haſt created all things, and for thy Pleaſure they are, and were created*, Rev. 4. 11.

The larger Potſherds of the Earth lifted up with Pride and Vanity, do not value nor mind the good Expreſſions of a Beggar and a mean Perſon, though they believe it to be ſincere. 'Tis their Sin and Weakneſs to ſlight their Brother of the ſame likeneſs, and as much a Man as themſelves, with all the Priviledge and Advantages of humane Nature. But God is not like unto them; He that firſt made, doth not forſake the Work of his hands, *Pſal.* 138. 8. 1 *Sam.* 12. 22. *Iſa.* 44. 21. He is pleaſed with, and hearkens unto the Voice of his Children. He who formed them after that manner, and for this purpoſe, doth accept the *Fruit of our Lips.*

They that know God, and have ſuch raiſed thoughts of him, as his viſible Works do ſet forth, are apt to doubt, that he who is ſo much above and greater then mankind, ſhould at all mind them, they being little and below his Cognizance: But Scripture doth moſt evidently ſatisfie to the contrary. There is the very Image of the Godhead upon our ſelves, and a Capacity to know and Worſhip him, all which give perfect aſſurance that we are related, and the Objects of his Concern. That he doth, and *will puniſh the World for their Evil, and the wicked for their iniquity*, Iſa. 13 11. is manifeſted when his wrath is kindled a little, for ſometimes Puniſhment doth begin to ſeize on the ungodly Sinner, even before he goes to receive the full recompence of his doings. By that abundant Miſery which is every where, he doth let all the Earth know, that he hath indignation againſt Sin, and this the place thereof. Again on the other hand, By ſeeing the felicity of his Choſen, by that little taſte of Happineſs he gives unto his dutiful Children, He doth thereby aſſure, that he deſigns to bring them unto greater, to encourage here, and reward hereafter. Their affliction and trouble doth manifeſt the Sin, even theſe have; *They are chaſtened of the Lord, that they ſhould not be Condemned with the World*, 1 Cor. 11. 32. That liberal Proviſion and plenty the Evil and unthankful have, is for Tryal or Retribution; for even theſe do ſome little good. *So that a Man ſhall ſay, Verily there is a reward for the Righteous: Verily he is a God that judgeth in the Earth*, Pſal. 58. 11. *The Lord looketh from Heaven: He beholdeth all the Sons of Men, from the place of his Habitation, he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth, He faſhioneth their Hearts alike, he conſidereth all their Works*, Pſal. 33. 13, 14, 15. God doth care for us, and *we have to do with him*, Heb. 4. 13. notwithſtanding his infinite Greatneſs, for he hath been pleaſed to admit thereof.

The *Word*, *Prayer*, and *Praiſe* do keep up this aſtoniſhing intercourſe. They expel the former Hatred, Averſation and Strangeneſs. *Can two walk together except they be agreed*? Amos 3 3. But they may, when they are. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at Peace*, Job 22. 21. *Abraham was called the Friend of God*, Jam. 2. 23. Many like ſayings the Holy Ghoſt makes uſe of as may create Humble Boldneſs and love to him. There is nothing affrightful in him to good Men, but *perfect love caſts out Fear*, 1 John 4. 8. When it is once begins to be eſtabliſhed and rooted,

rooted, it is no harſhneſs to make mention of his name; then to talk and think of him muſt be exceeding delightful. The very reaſon why natural and diſobedient people cannot endure to hear or ſpeak of God is for want of what is here mentioned; and they judge of others by themſelves: But examine your ſelves, is there any torment to ſpeak of what one loves? There is ſuch a thing as love of God; if themſelves would turn from every evil way and come near, they might be happy partakers, and not only conceive but be ſenſible thereof. It is the whole required of Man to love God with all his Heart, all his Soul, all his Strength, and all his Mind, to love him better then any, yea, all things beſides: As much as he can, and to uſe ſincere endeavours to love him more. The firſt thing to be done before any can come unto that, is to *hate evil*, Pſal 97.10. And then we may love the Lord, which gives a delicate reliſh of every duty we owe unto him; *O how love I thy Law? it is my Meditation all the Day*, Pſal. 119. 97. *My Meditation of him ſhall be ſweet, I will be glad in the Lord*, Pſal. 104. 34. *My Mouth ſhall be ſatisfied with Marrow and Fatneſs, whilſt my tongue praiſeth thee with joyful lips*, Pſal. 63, 5. *Praiſe ye the Lord, for it is good to ſing praiſes unto our God, for it is pleaſant, and praiſe is comely*, Pſal. 147. 1.

But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us, Rom. 5, 8. Now it is juſt and reaſonable that wonderful and gracious works ſhould be had in remembrance. To this end our Lord inſtituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood that we may call to mind, the one was broken, the other ſhed for us to obtain the forgiveneſs of our ſins. *This do in remembrance of me*, Luke 22. 19. Here is a poſitive command, and the refuſal is an act of Diſobedience; It is called by his own name, *the Communion of the body of Chriſt, and the communion of the blood of Chriſt*. 1 Cor 10. 16. The Pſalmiſt ſeems to have intended it in a prophetick Spirit, when he ſaid, *I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord*, Pſal. 116. 13. So that it may be applyed to this, *Every tranſgreſſion and diſobedience received a juſt recompence of reward*, Heb. 2. 2. Again, *He that deſpiſed Moſes Law, died without Mercy*, Heb. 10. 28. That Soul which did not receive the Paſſover was to be cut off from his people; And ought not the *Son of God* himſelf be as much *reverenced* in the Commandments he gave Of the Sacrament. Marke 12. 6.

gave us? Did he not work for us a greater Salvation, then the other did for our Fore-fathers in delivering them from the Land of *Ægypt*? May it not be fearfully expected, that those who either contemn or wilfully neglect this divine institution, shall not be admitted into that eternal inheritance Christ hath purchased for us? *And where I am, there shall my Servant be*, John. 12. 26. But he is none, who will not do the things Christ saith and commands. Let all consider of this and fear, and lay hold of opportunity for this duty.

That of 1 *Cor.* 11. 28, 29. should not keep people away, for this is a certain Rule, That if one truly repents, and discerns the Lords Body, that is, esteem it more then common Bread and Wine, he can never eat or drink unworthily. A common and ordinary capacity doth not judge of more then he sees or handles: Indeed there are too many, especially in Country Towns and Villages that are sunk into gross Ignorance and Darkness as to spiritual things; who was in the fault, will be judged at the last day: There being throughout our Land *like Priest, like People*, both backward and unwilling, the one to give, the other to receive instruction. Yet any one that is a Man and reasonable Creature (otherwise he could not do the common business of life) may conceive thus much, that God is, who made the World and all things therein; The Bible is his Word, and whatsoever is written therein, is most true and certain: When this is heard or read sincerely, it will by degrees let in more Light into his Soul: Especially if he goes to the place where it is Preached and Expounded. He may come to understand the sence and meaning, for the Scripture in necessary things is very plain, and then to conceive thereof in his mind. There he may learn that under the old Law God instituted many Ceremonies, and required the punctual observation of them; and though the beggarly Elements and carnal Ordinances are done away, for they were Types of Christ our Passover who is now risen; yet since his supper is ordained to be kept in perpetual remembrance, it must be by that way and manner himself hath prescribed.

As Parchment and Wax are little worth of themselves, but yet useful and significative of conveying Land one to another; So our Lord may Minister unto us his grace and benefits by the outward signes of Bread and Wine; and when they are received in this Ordi-

Ordinance, they are more to be esteemed in respect of the thing signified, then in our common eating and drinking. The Bread broken sets forth how the body of our Lord was torn upon the Cross, the Wine poured out puts in mind of his side being pierced and the shedding of his blood. *As often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lords death till he come*, 1 Cor. 11. 26.

The like Figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away the filth of the Flesh, but the answer of a good Conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 3. 21. That is, not so much the sprinkling or dipping in Water as the thing signified. The Apostle doth not speak to exclude it, for himself used it, and so did the other Apostles who had the Spirit of God, and all the Church down ever since. Now there is the same prejudice as to that, What doth the meer Water signifie? They might have put the same question to the Apostles themselves had they been in their time, or to our Lord in the institution of his Supper: There is not so much only in the outward sign, but there is in the thing signified.

Many remain still in Ignorance and Sin, but if they would be saved, let them come out from among their Sheep and Oxen, and lift up their eyes to Heaven, considering who inhabits there. They must not always be confined in a Barn, or with *Saul hide themselves among the Rushes*, or be wholly taken up with the little things of this short life, for they are called out and invited to receive a Kingdom. This is spoken in good earnest: Your only end of coming into this World is to serve God, and to know the things pertaining unto him, and hence to be translated up to receive it. If they do that for a while, they will at length perceive there is something more in the Ordinances, then what they at present imagine through the darkness and blindness that is in them; None can think slightly but who do not understand. If they do really believe on Christ, it would seem no strange thing to come unto his Supper.

The Man is to raise up the highest Love for God and his Christ, Remember the holy Covenant that hath passed between them, with a continued firm stedfastness and sincere purpose to perform the same. He may refresh and strengthen his Faith, especially on the Death of our Lord, and the Truth of his whole Gospel; he is to

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lift up his Soul in the most hearty Praises and lively Devotion: where is a constant fear and obedience to Almighty God, if he comes unexpectedly where the Sacrament is Administred, upon a little examination and reverence of mind he may receive. But where he hath notice before hand, and he may lay aside some of his Worldly Business as this may be done thrice in the Year at least, there let him not approach to this Holy Mystery without Solemn preparation before, for it is altogether of as high a nature, and deserves as great reverence as the Passover of Old. We are always to have Oyl ready in our Lamps, but then we should trim and make them ready at the meeting of the Bridegroom. It is not an humbling or carefulness for a day, nor a fit of holiness for a Season only, for this is the practice of them *Who are Foolish, Disobedient, Deceived, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures*, Tit. 3. 3. who fondly think to make atonement by this Ordinance, not considering that some will be rejected *who have eaten and drunk in Christs presence*, Luke 13. 26. But a due preparation consists in a constant course of keeping the Commandments of God; There is a building up in our most holy Faith, and a progress in the Christian Life, so that whosoever is sincere and willing as to that, may partake of this Supper to his comfort and benefit.

Give not that which is holy unto Dogs, is the express command of the Master of this Feast; Since the Church hath been remiss to this thing, and promiscuously admitted all, the Sacrament is become common and disesteemed; When she kept to the rules of our Lord, people were earnest and desirous to come, and sorrowful to be kept away.

If the Government of God over the World were not in a manner made precarious by those who take upon them the Office and Administration thereof, Men would be more willing and obedient under it. Neither would themselves be so *contemptible and base among the People*, if they had kept up that authority in word and power which the Lord had given. When a thing stoops or becomes easie, the consequent is to trample upon and not care for it; they are to answer before him, who in their several Generations have thus managed the cause of God. They have not done according to their direction in his Word, for that is *with Authority*, and would if truly Preached, command the most Rebellious and Proud hearts of the sons of Men. God is greater then Men, and

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as those who exercise Authority, would not suffer it to be brought low, neither should his Kingdom and rule over them diminish. Truth was once stablished in the Earth, the Kingdom of God was once set up *with Power*; but now through the treacherous yielding of the supporters, it hath been long falling away and loses strength. God is not the least beholden to his Creatures for serving him, as *Gen.* 4. 7. So afterwards his Commandments are given in a *Majestick* and *Authoritative* manner, *Exod.* 20. And though the stubborn Sinner saith in his heart, which he Manifests in practise, I will do this and that just contrary; yet he shall be answered again in Plagues and Punishment. In like manner did the Lord Jesus give out his Commission of Teaching; *Go ye into all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature: He that believeth and is Baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned*, Mark 16. 15, 16. If People do their duty, it is accepted; if not, they are to expect the danger: There hath been a wonderful deal of begging, yea, moreover civil Authority must be called in for aid to bring Mankind over to the ordinances of their God, and all will not do. *When their fear towards him is taught by the precept of Men*, they may come to perform such a Worship as is described in the foregoing part of the verse, of *drawing near with their Mouth, and honouring with their lips, but have removed their heart far from me*, Isa. 29.13. and that cannot be hindred by all legal constitutions. What Glory is it unto him to have a meer outward and feigned submission? If all things were done only according to direction in Scripture, if there was sound Preaching which maketh not ashamed, we should see other effects of it, even in this degeneracy and corruption of Times. Notwithstanding the conceit of Humane * Wisdom in opposition to the Divine, yet those ways which are only of Gods ordaining are much better for carrying on his Work and Glory, then the pretended helps Man fancies of his own invention. Those who are concerned herewith, may know what they have to do, and remember that Judgment Seat of Christ they must appear before; they are going out of the World, as their predecessors already are. * Isa. 29. 14.

O that Religion which hath been so long declining, might flourish once again! *Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make* Jerusalem *a Praise in the Earth*, Isa. 62. 6, 7. That the Church Militant on

Earth might be more Pure, Universal, Bright, and excellent towards the consummation thereof; for now it comes near to be Triumphant in Heaven: We have the Grace and Word of God which are sufficient to accomplish it, and it is left to us whether we will do thereafter, as we might if we would. Every one may sincerely strive for his part and to the utmost, and then the whole will be done: As it may by reducing the Ordinances of God to their right use, purging out the Old leaven, and taking away that corruption which hath been so long in them. In our good undertakings, *God shall bless us, and all the ends of the Earth shall fear him*, Psal. 67. 7. By the help given and that is further offered us, by the way shewed we might do great things if we would shake off unwillingness and Sloth. Then labour and be diligent, and the Blessed Work would begin; Things may be brought to such a pass, that *all shall know the Lord from the least of them unto the greatest of them*, Jer. 31. 34. Heb. 8. 11. They may come to discern what is pleasing unto him, and do thereafter, that it may be well with them and their Children for ever.

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet, and shew my people their Transgression, and the House of Jacob *their Sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my Ways as a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinance of their God, they ask of me the Ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God*, Isa. 58. 1, 2. Even at this time they go by Multitudes unto the House of God, and are constant to hear his Will, they are inquisitive after it, and make a shew to observe it, and as if they had not departed from that established order of things he hath set up. There is as much Profession and Devotion in the World as ever; But if it is out of a right Principle of glorifying God, then they will hearken to any thing which tends to that. Nay, if it be out of meer selfish saving the Soul, and are endued with real Wisdom, and they would not be willingly amongst those *many who will seek to enter in at the straight Gate, and shall not be able*, Luke 13. 24. Then I say, themselves would be gladly informed if there may be any mistake or deceit in this matter; in those times of general back-sliding and revolt from God he speaks of by his Servants the Prophets, there was as much of his visible and outward Worship as in these days. They did cry out, *The Tem-*

Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, Jer. 7. 4. and did frequent it as now people are zealous to go to Church, or ſuch a Congregation. But that ſtubbornneſs and diſobedience in the heart, their ſinning which they would excuſe and make atonement for by this way, did juſtly make God angry, and to abominate their Hypocriſie. When the outward duties (as it is with ſome) do make up the whole of their Religion; Who know not or do not practice any thing more then going to Church, hearing Sermons, uſing Prayer, receiving the Sacrament; all this is but vain, and will ſignifie nothing; for theſe are means of Grace and in order to ſomething more. Now it would be ſtrange (though common with many) *to be hearers of the VVord and not doers of it deceiving their own ſelves*, Jam. 1. 22. So is Praying to comply with Gods Will, and yet not endeavouring to do ſo; or to Remember the Covenant in Baptiſm, and yet not obſerve it, or only with ſlight purpoſes and reſolution at that preſent time, when the words thereof are to *Obediently keep Gods Holy VVill and Commandments, and walk in the ſame all the days of our Life*. It is mocking and diſſimulation with God if they do not ſincerely labour after, what they ſeem unto him with their lips and outward geſture to deſire.

Indeed the Ordinances are part of the Commandments of God; we uſe them out of Obedience and Homage unto him; He commands to hear his Will, to call on Him, and to receive his Sacraments; but then there is a further reaſon of all, to *make ready a People prepared for the Lord*. It can hardly be expreſſed how averſe our Nature is to God and the things of his Kingdom, how hard it is to cleave unto him as he requires, and how eaſie it is to fall away and ſtart aſide. *Only take heed to thy ſelf and keep thy Soul diligently, leſt thou forget the things which thine eyes have ſeen. Take heed unto your ſelves leſt ye forget the Covenant of the Lord your God*, Deut. 4. 9. 23. The outward duties put in mind of this, and are to be retained all the days of our life, for whilſt we are here in the body, Temptations from without and Corruption from within would betray us into ſin and forgetfulneſs, unleſs prevented by that Grace which is conveyed through theſe means. Our goodneſs would be as the morning Dew, or as an early Cloud ſo ſoon paſſeth it away, we ſhould ſoon become Barren and Unfruitful, unleſs God was pleaſed to

inſtil more daily through his Word and Ordinances. *My Doctrine ſhall drop as the Rain, My Speech ſhall diſtill as the Dew, as the ſmall Rain upon the tender Herb, and as the Showers upon the Graſs*, Deut. 32. 2. Otherwiſe the manifold Sollicitations and Objects of this World would be apt to ſcorch and make us fade even in our good Ways, but that received in, renders the Vineyard meet for our God. If his Word falls upon the *duſt of the Wilderneſs*, or Stony and dry places, it may ſeem loſt and ineffectual, not for want of Worth and Excellency in it ſelf, for it is the ſame Rain there; but the incapacity is in the ſubject which doth not profit, becauſe it is *not mixed with Faith in them that hear it*, or they ſuffer it to run off again as uſeleſs Water.

But if it takes Root, there ſucceed thoſe accompliſhments of the inward Man, and there ſpring up the Fruits of the Spirit. That the Soul may be renewed according to its firſt Creation from whence it was fallen; But now it is to be reſtored to the likeneſs of God, and become partaker of the Divine Nature, The old corruption may be in a great meaſure taken away or ſubdued, the ſeeds of good may be cheriſhed and grow up into acts and habits of doing well.

Were Men aſſured the things of God were for their Happineſs, they would be for them; they are indeed called *the things that belong to our Peace*, but that is hereafter; they make a promiſe of ſafety, when no danger is ſeen; but now they ſeem to trouble and diſquiet.

Much hath been ſaid already as to every part of this ſurmiſe; And what if the carnal Man ſhould be gratified yet further, and it could be made probable unto him, yea clearly evidenced, if he would try what is here affirmed, that they are for our preſent good alſo. Let him ask thoſe who have had experience of the Way of the Lord, who have trodden the *Path of Peace*: If they be thought partial Judges in their own Caſe, let him enquire from himſelf, or others of the way of Sin and Wickedneſs. He can find nothing from thoſe who have been throughly practiſed therein, but outward Smiles, for they can give no true Commendation, but Silence, ſad Wiſhes, Hypocritical Looks do betray their inward diſlike and ſorrow of heart. The open Teſtimony and Acknowledgment of the firſt concerning the excellency of his; the others feigned Laughter, deep Silence, or vain drol-

lery;

Drollery would weigh ſomewhat with a Wiſe Man, concerning the Goodneſs of the one, and Suſpicion of the other. They have various and different Effects in the Perſons of Men, but if moreover he would diligently examine the Nature and Reaſon of things, and find them accordingly, If they are both the ſame in Speculation, and alſo in Practiſe (for theſe go together in things Divine, when they are rightly underſtood and univerſally complyed withal) What can be more deſired for the full Satisfaction of a prudent and conſidering Man? If he ſees others already at Peace, who have went the ſame way, and alſo can be juſtified from the very thing; And further might be ſeen, felt and underſtood within himſelf, if he would make a through experience, and continue it for ſome time. What is for our Good, Peace and Benefit, hath a ſhew at firſt of Evil, diſturbance and inconvenience; this frightens the Fooliſh Nature of Man, who doth not perceive what is hidden under the different diſguiſes of things. The meer outſide and covering is the leaſt, but thought ſhould be had to what is ſubſtantial and within.

In ſhort, Good is Happineſs, and Sin is Miſery; the more a Man hath of the one, and leſs of the other, ſo he hath the bleſſed Effects, and is freed from Vexation. *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit Sin, for his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot Sin becauſe he is born of God*, 1 John 3. 9. And then he hath not diſturbance nor Reſtleſsneſs of mind, neither is he in danger of the Puniſhment to come.

In Truth, we do many times diſquiet our ſelves in vain, being vexed for, and deſiring we know not what: But this proceeds from the evil of *Ignorance*, a want of underſtanding the Nature of things, which would take away all this Miſery. A right underſtanding puts upon diligence and endeavour to provide our ſelves, ſo as to keep off the Evil and obtain the Good ſet before us. And we are not perplexed with thoſe common things, which either do not at all, or not much concern us. What *Solomon* ſaith, *In much Wiſdom is much Grief, and he that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth Sorrow*, Eccleſ. 1. 8. That is, When it is only confined to the things before us, and of this Life, for then it quickens the Reſentment of Miſeries here, and finds out no Remedy: But if extended further, as the Excellency of the knowledge

knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord doth, there it mitigates the Vanity and Vexation of the present by hope of better things hereafter; satisfies of our imperfect State, in order to being made Perfect; and prompts to the doing of all things, to make that sure unto our selves. A little smattering of knowledge makes more miserable, but if throughly improved and stretched out to its due pitch of Gospel Revelation, the succeeding Eternity, and as it enters within the Vail, there it is a necessary help, and if throughly complyed withal, it will secure us of the blessed End.

The first Man is of the Earth Earthly, the second Man is the Lord from Heaven. As is the Earthly such are they also that are Earthy: and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are Heavenly, 1 Cor. 15. 47, 48. As Man was made in the image of God, which was chiefly in Holiness and good upon his Soul, from which he by Transgression fell; So when he is born again, he is transformed into the Likeness of his Creator. Whilst on Earth he ascends as it were into Heaven, the place of perfect Felicity, as this is an intermixture and imperfection of both, that below is of deplorable and absolute Misery. The utmost Happiness which only arises from the things here, makes the Soul cleave unto the Ground, and at last sinks into the lowest Hell; but the true, as it came down, ascends again; Like Stocks planted by our Heavenly Father, which are grafted and shoot forth into Trees of Immortality. What is begun here, God is pleased to add, that it may grow, till it reaches above the Clouds, and is perfected in the Regions of Bliss. The one is *Earthly, Sensual* and *Devillish* expressed in its three Degrees of sinking, till it comes to the lowest. *But the Wisdom that is from above is first pure, then Peaceable, Gentle and easie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits without Partiality, and without Hypocrisie. And the Fruit of Righteousness is sown in Peace, of them that make Peace*, Jam. 3. 15, 17, 18. In the time of imperfection here, we begin to lay a Foundation, which will be builded on, and made consummate in the Heavens. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*, Mat. 5. 48. *As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *And every Man that hath his hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure*, 1 John 3. 3. We are sincerely according to the Grace

Grace and Power given us, to imitate him in all his Communicable Attributes and Excellencies. All our Happineſs ſhould tend upwards, or otherwiſe it is a vain ſhew and deceit; for aſſuredly as we hope that we might be Partakers of his Holineſs, ſo we muſt expect to be Happy, as he is Happy. It was an excellent Act of the Old *Heathens* (to the ſhame of Chriſtians, who ſeek for boaſting) in taking upon them the Name of *Philoſophers*, that is Lovers of Wiſdom, for they ſaid truly, none but God ſhould be called Wiſe: So he is ſtiled *Only Wiſe*, Rom. 16. 27. Our Saviour checked one for calling him *Good* upon the ſame Reaſon. In like manner none ſhould be called *Happy* (which is the Comprehenſion of all) but we are in the way, and do endeavour after Happineſs only; And when we ſhall come there, we muſt with the *four and twenty Elders fall on our Faces to aſcribe Greatneſs and Bleſſedneſs unto our God only*; for he hath created all things, and of him are all things, and they do but partake of his Fulneſs, and all they have is from him.

But hold we are now in the way, and therefore are to be more careful about this, then what ſhall be at the End. We ſhould know, and do what helps toward this perfect Happineſs. The Goodneſs of a thing lies in its right Temper and Equality; Health of Body conſiſts in a due Circulation of the Blood, in the even and uſual Proportion of moiſt and dry, hot and cold. So there is Peace in the Soul, when the underſtanding doth its Office, the Deſires and Paſſions keep ſtill in their juſt place, and each doth what he ſhould do: For if they do nothing all, (as it is the wretched Condition of many? Whoſe Soul as it were ſleeps in the Body, juſt keeping Life and Senſe, who in Lazineſs and Sloth do rather ſnort then live out their days) this deceives into Miſery. It hath a ſhew of Peace, but it is Stupidity, deſcends into the lower parts, and utterly hinders from coming up to Heaven. And this (though it makes no ſuch great noiſe) is the Deſtruction of the World; their refuſing to exerciſe that Ability God hath given them, either by not uſing the powers of the Soul, or not doing it to the utmoſt on its proper and excellent End. *Wherefore is a price put into the hands of a Fool, and he hath no heart to get Wiſdom?* Let the latter ſort conſider this Command of our Lord, *ſtrive to enter in at the ſtreight Gate, for many, I ſay, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able,*

Luke

Luke 13. 24. Do but really endeavour according to what thou canſt; for not thoſe who *Strive*, but *Seek*, that is in a careleſs and negligent manner, who miſs thereof. We being now in the way to the Reſt that remaineth for the People of God, muſt go on and be travelling; or we ſhall never come to it. Again, all things ſucceed well when they keep within their own Station and bounds, and move according to their ſeveral kinds; more then this is Confuſion and Diſorder, leſs is lying ſtill and involves in the doom of unprofitable Servants.

In the things Commanded us, ſome may ſeem to thwart our Nature, yet only as it is corrupted; but they are not contrary to it, when conſidered in its Original purity. If any thing ſeems harſh and irkſome, it is to better and to advance, to heal that which was ſick, to reſtore the fallen, to recover ſight to the blind, to give Liberty to the Captive. It is reaſonable to undergo a little trouble or inconvenience in order to a greater Good; that alſo is in our ſelves, for we ſinned with our Father, and have ſince added freſh Provocation to his Diſobedience. Now the Law is ordained to help and retrieve the Condition of poor Man, that he may *come to himſelf*, Luke 15. 17. take Care that he do not ſink below himſelf, to bring him into his due poſture, and then to raiſe him yet higher. By ſetting before us, and then ſtirring us up to endeavour after thoſe *great and precious Promiſes, that by theſe you might be Partakers of the Divine Nature, having eſcaped the Corruption that is in the World through Luſt*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. Firſt to make us *Men*, and then to be as *Angels*, and thence to be tranſlated into a *Greater Similitude unto God himſelf*.

The End of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and of a Good Conſcience, and Faith unfeigned, 1 Tim. 1. 5. Love to God and Men, a right inward Diſpoſition of the Soul is the whole required of us. There are indeed ſome things given to prove our Love; Obedience and Faith; Of this ſort are the Precepts of Self denial, Taking up the Croſs, hating Father and Mother, ſubjecting our ſelves unto Perſecution, rather then offend God. This exerciſes Faith and Love in a high Degree, becauſe we endure real, preſent and viſible inconveniences, only out of Reſpect to him that is inviſible, for future, but certain Rewards. Even now he gives Grace and Strength to bear, hereby aſſuring he will give Glory and Recompence hereafter.

God

God doth by Inward Conſolation or outward Help, arm his Servants againſt all Sufferings. There are none of his Commandments (though they may ſeem auſtere to the ignorant and diſobedient) but tend to the Happineſs of thoſe, who do thereafter. God is good to all who believe, wait and truſt in him. But theſe are extraordinary Precepts, which are (as *Abrahams* offering up his Son) that the Tryal of us might be more perfectly had, to which particular choſen Ones are called out. They happen only at ſome Seaſons according as his Gracious (for ſo I will call it here) Providence is pleaſed to Order. Perſecution, Reproach, Loſſes are not all the days of our Life, theſe are ſhortened for the Elects ſake. *For the Rod of the wicked ſhall not Reſt upon the lot of the Righteous, leſt the Righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity*, Pſal. 125. 3. they alſo are but Fleſh. There is a *taking up the Croſs daily*, Luke 9. 23. but that may be underſtood of a Preparation againſt it, or a ſuffering in leſſer inconveniencies; Yet ſtill it is ſo ordered by the Goodneſs of God, that his Servants may paſs the greater part of their time in Reſt and Quietneſs. If they have Evil returned for Good, this doth not ariſe from the Commandments of God, but from the iniquity and perverſeneſs of Men. Thoſe are good and reaſonable, but the inconvenience Springs from the Malice and Folly of others; Take away that, and there would not be the leaſt outward harm in obeying God. The greater Perſecution ariſes from hence, for it is not through *following of good only*, if they keep that to themſelves: The wicked may hereupon conceive ſecret Rancour and Indignation, yet this doth not commonly break forth into open violence. But then for the other part when they come to meddle with the People, to tell them of their Tranſgreſſions, and ſeek to reform them, this was the unwelcome Meſſage that ſtirred them up to Hatred and Cruelty. Now conſider the thing abſtractedly, a King ſends a Meſſenger to his Subjects, to acquaint them of the Violation of his Laws, He would have them make acknowledgment and do ſo no more, then they ſhall have Protection and Peace, otherwiſe they ſhall be deſtroyed. As God is greater then Man, Why ſhould he be hardly thought of, for keeping up his Government over

the work of his hand? Wherein is his Messenger to be blamed? What fault is he in for doing only what he is Commanded to do?

It is secretly conceived, that Religion is prejudicial to the Happiness of mankind, in that it is the disturber of Society, and an hindrance to the Peaceableness thereof. This medling vexing Humour spoils all: What Reproof is to private Persons, that is faithful Preaching to the publick; They fancy, it serves only to terrifie and disquiet Men. But as all Government and Community is founded on Religion, the difference of Good and Evil, right and wrong: These would be meer Words only if not attended with Rewards and Punishments; And these would not restrain neither, if not for God and the Conscience of Men, as also their Concern of a succeeding Eternity, for otherwise Rapine and Injustice, discontent and weariness of Life would Attempt strange things. And therefore the Wise Politicians and ungodly Men of the World would just have so much Religion, as to prevent this and no more. But what unworthy thoughts have such People of Almighty God, that his Service must be brought down only to their purposes, his Kingdom and Dominion over Men, must come under theirs, whereas it is now in its due place of Subordination unto that of God. How do a small number of Grashoppers here in the Earth think of, and would do towards the Great Lord of the World? How do Men that shall die and must appear before him in Judgment, demean themselves towards him, now they are but a little while in the way? It is strange, there should be any such Pride or Rebellion of Heart in *Christendom*, yet there is more here as may be perceived by the wicked Talk of some, then in the Nations which have not known God. To silence the Blasphemy of these, and to allay the thoughts of Heart; Consider, That *all ungodly Deeds, and all hard Speeches against the Lord*, are for want of a perfect understanding of him and his ways. Let them reflect, who it must be that made the World and all things therein, and then speak lightly of him if they can; Let them observe that great Order which is in every part thereof, and then they can never conclude him to be a disturber of Affairs here below. 'Tis only the abuse and

Jude 15.

and non complyance with Religion that is the disturber of the World. Those who *do violence to the Law*, Zeph. 3. 4. *and pervert the Gospel*, Gal. 1. 7. Bring in confusion and every evil work. There is an inclination in the Nature of Man to accept of Gods terms, *to arise and be saved*; and he not giving way throughly unto that, is vexed and troubled. 'Tis Hypocrites, Partial Christians, and those convictions of wicked ungodly Men, not knowing what to do, which is the *Disturbance* of the Inhabitants of the Earth. *Let God be true, and every Man a Lyar*; surmise what we will, all the evil is from our selves, but we have that abominable disingenuous way of taking it off from our selves, and would with our Fore-fathers impute it somewhere else, by this owning we are the Children of him and partakers of his Corruption. Gen. 3. 12. Whom would we plead with, or excuse our selves before? Are we not to supplicate to God for his Mercy? And is this the way by false unjust insinuations to provoke him yet more? At last these things will be discerned plainly, as they may be at present known out of that Book by which all are to be judged; *Righteous art thou O Lord, and true are thy Judgments*; they are ordained to give *Peace on Earth, and good-will towards Men.* If it happens contrary, it is because horribly abused or not observed: It tends to the Happiness and benefit of Society, for what doth more then those Duties of Love, Justice and Mercifulness as they are strictly enjoyned by the Son of God? What can be more endearing then to strive together, and help one another forward to the common Salvation?

In the natural body each part is joyned and doth depend upon the whole, and the good of this again upon the good and order of each part; so in the Soul as to things invisible (but to her sensible) there is an happy connexion of them. One tends to the good of her in this Capacity, another to that according to its several workings, and all together for the benefit of the whole. Gods Power and Wisdom is to be seen in such a contrivance and order of things. 1 Cor. 12. To Nature and the dictates thereof, he hath superadded Grace and Commandments both to will and to do further; He that hath done so far, will certainly bring us to Happiness at last. We can well judge of the goodness of his Na-

Nature by what he doth; He who hath given Being, and ordered all things for our well being, if we do comply with, and not reſiſt his Will, ſhall alſo perfect the ſame at laſt, *Lord thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou alſo haſt wrought all our Works in us*, Iſa. 26. 12. And whoſoever doth not find it ſo in him, it is by reaſon of what the Prophet adds further, *O Lord our God, other Lords beſides thee have had dominion over us*, verſe 13. There is ſome other reigning ſin, but whoſoever will give up himſelf wholly to the guidance of our God, ſhall find this bleſſed effect; I ſay again, he ſhall certainly find this bleſſed effect. All his Commandments even as this preſent time *belong to our Peace*, which is begun and imperfect here, but will be finiſhed and throughly conſummated in *Jeruſalem that is above, the viſion of Peace*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII

Of WISDOM and PRUDENCE.

I need not ſpend many words to ſhew that Wiſdom tends to the Happineſs of Mankind, for this is acknowledged; but the enquiry will be, Whether Religion be this true Wiſdom or not: and if this can be made to appear to them, who know not much more then the talk and rumour thereof. For there are ſome who think all is but prate, and that things happen at all peradventure; and therefore are for catching what good they can, and bear the evil when it comes, for there is no remedy. But none reaſons after this manner as to the Actions, and what are eſteemed Accidents of this Life. It is evident, that things are and may be obtained by prudent care and foreſight, and by a wiſe management: So the miſcarriages we fall into might have been avoided, if we had done ſuch and ſuch things. All Tranſactions and Affairs, whether of greater or ſmaller moment, depend upon fore-going means. It is the Office of Wiſdom to make choice of the right and beſt; and of Prudence to make diligent uſe of them accordingly. He that diſcerns not thus much is a Fool and knows nothing, and to go about to convince ſuch an one with Arguments, is what *Solomon* ſaith, *To bray a Fool in a Morter amongſt Wheat with a Peſtil, yet will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him*, Prov. 27. 22. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Knowledge, but Fools deſpiſe Wiſdom and Inſtruction*, Prov. 1. 7. Theſe alſo are in direct term called Fools; for notwithſtanding their own ſelf-conceit, they might thus apprehend, that there is yet more to be known and put in mind of, as there was before they had learned and gathered what they now ſeem to know. None will own openly (though ſome may be found not to follow it) that there is no need of good counſel, and circumſpect action as to the things of this World. Many confine it all here, but think Wiſdom avails not to any thing beyond. In a Chriſtian Coun-

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IRREGULAR

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trey few will proclaim their Unbelief, yet the ſecret imaginations of Thouſands are to this purpoſe. That Religion is a reſerve, and a thing of doubt. What may befall hereafter in another place, they ſee it not; or it is decreed one way or another, the fewer thoughts they have of it, the better, but however juſt ſo many as will ſerve turn.

Such is the reaſoning in their minds when it is half way, but ſtretch it up higher, and it will dictate thus much. There is not one thing under the Sun, wherein Reaſon is not neceſſary one way or another, and will, if made uſe of throughly, find help. But firſt of all, it leads out of this labyrinth and perplexity of things here below, and looks up unto God who made all things, and hath eſtabliſhed a courſe of things. *Who giveth graſs to the Eater, and miniſtreth ſeed to the Sower*; for Cattel which cannot uſe the means, the Earth brings forth of it ſelf, but not Corn unto Man without his right way of Labour. To whom he hath given skill to improve nature, that ſhe ſhall bring forth her increaſe more abundantly. Thoſe which cannot Spin nor Sow, have Food and Raiment without; but Man who knoweth both, muſt be Naked and Famiſh if he doth not; ſo the Wiſdom God hath endued him withall, continues his Life: ſee *Iſa.* 28. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. And then he being in a frail Body, what inſtinct is to brutes, that is reaſon to him (if he would act according to the beſt of it) to preſerve from Sickneſs, and outward evil Accidents. When they befall, there his underſtanding would do ſomewhat towards remedy, by looking unto and removing the cauſe of diſorder: and after all, that which is weak and mortal muſt ſicken and die. The Body is purely natural; we neither made, ſo we do not preſerve it, which breaths and moves when we neither know, nor conſider, nor take care; but increaſes and decreaſes of it ſelf, yet (under the Protector above) a right underſtanding helps towards the well-being of that during the time appointed. If it doth to this which is ſubject to nature and neceſſity, that it cannot always relieve; much more would it as to that part of us which is both free and immortal, God having made it ſo, which hath knowledge of good and evil given unto her, and alſo power to embrace the one and flie from the other. The Body forgets what is paſt, being only for the preſent, and knows not what is to come; but the Soul remembers

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the things that have been, casts a transitory glance on the present, and knows the things afar of which pertain to her. She believes him faithful who hath promised, and true who hath fore-warned. The Prophets in old time were called *Seers*; for having their Knowledge from God of what was to come, they saw it, as if then actually before their Eyes. And we have as great certainty of the things to come, as they had of their particular Messages. This one capacity of knowing before hand, would render mankind safe and secure, if they would give way and act according to it.

It is evident, that the things before us are temporal and do pass away: It is a folly to fix up a rest where we do not continue, a meer deceit and disappointment to place Happiness in what doth not satisfie. It is reasonable to take care about the things eternal, and where we are to live for ever; as we make a great stir to have somewhat a longer and better Passage through this World. This Life will as certainly have an end as it did begin; and therefore, thought should be taken about that which will follow and always endure, as concerning that now which draws on towards its end. By Faith and Consideration the invisible and future things of the other World are seen, and also present; then the Man acts to them, as to the things before us. By what hath been already fulfilled, and now is, he concludes that it shall still be; by what is evident and certain already, he may prepare for those things which are no otherwise uncertain then as to come, and in another place. He must be so great a Fool, that one would think a reasonable Creature cannot be, who believes the Gospel and considers, and yet doth not live accordingly. To do both is not in the power of any, and therefore the last is neglected. But can they judge any evil the less, which happens upon them through their own inconsideration? Is not this a stinging aggravation thereof, and so will be much more when there is no possibility of redress, as such are the concerns of Eternity. The Ungodly and Sinner expose themselves to a real and intolerable danger, without any hope or design, having no security or preservative against it.

There are many wise considerations which move people when they are afar off, to come unto God; but when they approach somewhat nearer in his Word, there is such power and

demonſtration of the Spirit, that the obſtinate cannot gainſay. The firſt makes to be Religious in general, to be *almoſt a Chriſtian*; The laſt doth it particularly and altogether: And hence Satan who deceives every way, will ſuffer Men thus far; but tryes to keep off from the Scriptures, which are able to make wiſe unto Salvation. The firſt may bring to the outward Worſhip of God, a moral Converſation, but all upon ſelfiſh Principles; the laſt raiſes that excellent foundation of Faith and Love, teaches to Worſhip in Spirit and Truth, ends in all Obedience and good Works. Let them be advertiſed, that whoſe Religion is built only upon Prudential motives, though this is a good preparatory to go further, yet they alone are not ſufficient to Salvation, for without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, *Heb.* 11. 6. it muſt be done in order to him; and not meerly out of reſpect had to ones ſafety, or providing for the uncertainty. And how can it be expected, God ſhould reward Men for that which they do with no intention to him? They ſerve God in a careleſs indifferent way, juſt to ſave their own Souls, and no more. They do ſuch things out of reſpect to themſelves, and not out of Love and Duty to God. Their Principle is Wiſe Caution, but not Faith. The miſtake is, they reſt in that, and do not come up to the other; whereas true diſcretion would bring them on to thoſe means of obtaining and confirming Faith, if they would ſtill act purſuant to it. This ſuggeſts not to labour in vain, not lightly to endeavour, but ſurely to get the thing we aim at, when it may be certainly had by giving all diligence to make our Calling and Election ſure. He that goes but half way will no more come to his Journeys end, then he who doth not move one ſtep towards it; when he hath gone ſo far, Reaſon prompts to go on throughly, becauſe there is ſo much behind, and a little more will ſet him at the deſired end. What did induce to begin, doth urge to preſs forwards ſtill, and to uſe thoſe further helps which are neceſſary towards it. He is an unthinking Fool who is regardleſs of his own Happineſs or Miſery, eſpecially when a ſlight appearance of the firſt, and not enduring to be interrupted, makes him willing to be thus; but as he loves his own pleaſure or eaſe, let him endeavour to preſerve it ſtill, by taking care againſt this ſhall fail what will be hereafter. Every Soul muſt go into Heaven or Hell, there is no avoiding of it:

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We are invited to the first with Intreaties, Solicitations, gracious Methods, and all good ways. *God would have all Men to be saved*, so there is a willingness in them to be saved likewise. But the difference is, He would have it only in the way of Obedience and Holiness; they are for any other then that, or not going, or not continuing therein so much as they should. Now when it is taking care for themselves, or a fear of the Wrath to come, they imagine less will preserve from that; an indifferent outward Conversation and not open Ungodliness, or abstinence from such scandalous Sins will set them safe as to all. But had they a true love for God, they would think nothing they could do too much for him. The other thoughts will be quieted by Deceits and false Presumption. But further, when a Man sees a good set before him to be had at such a time, there he goes on contentedly, with such a course of action and endeavour, as he knows before-hand is necessary to obtain it. Neither is he impatient if not had sooner, for he knew before it would not be until then. The recompence of reward is much more valuable then all those little ends Men propose to themselves here, and will abundantly answer for all seeming disadvantages it hath over present things. But it is reserved in another World; we must in a short time go out of this, and in the mean while use those means which God who hath promised it in his Word, hath there taught as necessary to be partaker of it. What our Saviour advises of a King making War, so we may consider of the terms on which we are to enter into Gods Service; only Grace here, and Glory hereafter; necessary accommodations for our Pilgrimage, but the true rest to come; of which we have this assurance we must depart from this we are now in, and he is as good as his word in what things he promised as to the present: And therefore we may trust further on. However, if he should suffer us to continue in the dust of the Earth, it is but what we were before, we can lose nothing; we have his Word that he will not leave us there, but raise us up again and reward us. *Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord*, Psal. 107.43. They shall see the Justice and Equity of his proceedings, in that they shall certainly have what he hath promised; only it belongeth to them to be meet partakers thereof. The sure way to obtain is *to have Faith in God, and to love him with all our Heart.*

Never

Never any perished that had these. *Moses* indeed came on Mount *Pisgah*, he saw an earthly *Canaan*, and never came into it; but now is in a much better *viz.* the Heavenly. Men may be, and are disappointed in their pursuits after earthly things, though they used diligence and wisdom, and were ready to lay hold on them; but none that doth so as to Heaven, who hath the *Hope which enters within the Vail*, and such a sight thereof as to overlook present things, who takes up this firm resolution, for that will I labour and care all the days of my Life, he shall not miss thereof. *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your Labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. Willingness to be happy, self-preservation, and knowing the time to come will be as much present, as what now is: these set forward; but then godly Discretion, and the Wisdom from above make a perfect and a blessed Work, to be such as to entitle to the promises, to strive earnestly; the first points at the good, this puts in a certain way of having it.

It is one prejudice against Religion, that Men may do much therein; and yet all do not come to Heaven, that propose this to themselves. It is most certain, that without Obedience to God there is no Salvation to be had. *For the Nation and Kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish*, Isa. 60. 12. which is true as to every particular Soul. And though several bear Fruit for a season and go aside, others continue longer in a blind course of partial Obedience, and yet miscarry for all; this is their want of consideration of what God doth sufficiently fore-warn them in his Word, as *Mat.* 5. 20. and in other places. They might do more, if they would: They might obey and follow the direction of Scriptures; but some are for seeking Salvation any where else, would work it out of their own wit and fancies. Surely it is convenient to stand beholden unto him for that which himself promises, and shews the way, and is the only Author of. If the Man would please and get the favour of God, it is requisite he should hearken and attend unto what is his Mind and Will. If he would not be mistaken in the only way to Happiness, it is reasonable he should give up himself to this guide of the Lord. *The Wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way; but the Folly of Fools is deceit*, Prov. 14. 8. There have many perished through the subtlety of Satan, and the deceitfulness

ceitfulneſs of their own Hearts, through their wilfulneſs and inconſideration, not ſuffering themſelves to be inſtructed aright; or they will not ſeek out true Information, as all wiſe Men are very careful to do in their Titles to their Eſtate, or making ſure of any temporal good. And they would do the very ſame in reference to the eternal, if they did throughly exerciſe that Wiſdom God hath given them; which dictates to make uſe of his Grace and Means, his Word and Truth. *In all thoſe Fancies, Excuſes and Deceits which beguil ſo many, if they would give their thoughts full ſcope, ſomething would come in to detect the falſhood of them; but they greedily take up with the whim and conceit, but ſtifle and not attend to that which may be alledged on the other ſide, and ſo they willingly err in their Hearts.* The two great acts of Deliberation are about coming into the way of Salvation, and doing enough to obtain. For the firſt, none can think but he muſt preſently determine for it; but to the latter there is the general deceivableneſs. But in thoſe manifold thoughts concerning that, there would one come in ſtill (if not cruſhed) to preſs forward to do more; for ſuch an exceeding good cannot be made too ſure of. We have an example in an holy Man of old, who ſaith, *If by any means I might attain unto the Reſurrection of the Dead, not as though I had already attained, forgetting thoſe things behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before. I preſs towards the Mark, for the price of the high Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. 3. 11, 12, 13, 14. What earneſtneſs of expreſſion is here, which only acquaints with his alike endeavours?

But this would lead to that ſtrict preciſe way, which goes under the name of Folly and Frenſie. It is called ſo, yea, and eſteemed with the uppermoſt thought: They cannot throughly judge and pronounce it ſo. Let thoſe who have any reverence for God, take heed how they ſpeak of Him and his Ways, which ſhine forth in his Servants. *We be Fools for Chriſts ſake. for whether we be beſides our ſelves, it is to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 13. If any thing is done that may have the imputation of Folly and Madneſs, let not thoſe of the ſame Profeſſion endeavour to expoſe them to the wicked and ungodly World. Chriſt himſelf had the ſame ſcandal, *Mark* 3. 21. *John* 10. 20. ſo others, 2 *Kings* 9. 11. *Jer.* 29. 26, 27. *Hoſ.* 9. 7. *Acts* 26. 24. The *Jews* were the Object of Scorn and Laughter to the Nations of the

the World. *The Adversaries did mock at her Sabbaths*, Lam. 1. 7. Their Circumcision was a Proverb of Reproach. So Christianity at first was esteemed foolishness by them, and the Heathen World; and these Scoffers are come down among us. Who seem Worshippers of God, and say they are Christians; yet these call others Fools and Mad-men, for what they do only by direction of, and obedience unto his Word. They assent to the truth of that; and therefore by that may be now discerned (as it will be determined at last) Who is wise or not, if such an one is in his right wits or no. There are many things, which even among the Religious are passed over for meer nicieties, and vain Scruples; which are the Observation of some of the lesser Commands, and seem to have been therefore given for tryal, whether we would suffer Shame, Reproach, and be accounted Fools for the sake of God. *That abstaining from all appearance of evil*, seems ridiculous for no other reason, but because it is not commonly practised. Where the Love of Christ is shed abroad in the Heart, care is had of the least thing that displeaseth him; as also it puts upon every thing, which may be acceptable unto him. Why may not such a comparison be used, when the Apostle doth the like? 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. Where is Love, there is Fondness, and many odd things are done which are well accepted. And if we suppose this of the Soul towards God, there may be even further those excesses and nimieties in Religion, which undoubtedly are well-pleasing in his sight, though they may seem strange unto the Ignorant.

As to the other charge of Madness, let this be answered. Where the Spirit of God is in a greater Measure in some then in others, things may be done and proceed from this cause, which are so commonly esteemed. We must expunge many places out of Scripture, confirmed by experience, if we deny workings of Gods Spirit in these days; but it is subject unto, and keeps within the bounds of his Revelation. The true Prophets of old did for the time shew forth some signs of Madness, at least to be reputed so; though they did still retain, and had afterwards the free use of their Reason and Faculties. Satan, who doth continually set himself against God's Ways, to keep up the mist of ignorance and unbelief, did endeavour to imitate in like things, by shewing forth Fanaticism and appearance of divine Phrensie, with consternation of Body and mind,

mind, that it might go off, and ſeem only as an ordinary Diſtemper or Irregularity in both. There hath been obſerved a manifeſt diverſity between the Prophecyings and Miracles of God, the Illuſions and lying Wonders of Satan. The difference of things is very nice and critical, which ſhould be curiouſly and ſtrictly examined; and this would be as much to the confirmation of Faith, as a ſlight view doth unſettle it. Obſerve further between what things are in themſelves, and what they appear to others: According to the capacity and underſtanding of the Judgers, they are thought true or falſe, whereas the nature of them is ſtill the ſame in it ſelf. Many things, which are the effect of natural Wit, Art and Invention, paſs with the ignorant ſort for Conjuring. What doth exceed common apprehenſion, may ſeem, yea and be called by them Madneſs. Or if they can a little conceive of its Worth and Excellency, then the ſpirit of envy may find fault and miſname it, becauſe of the conſciouſneſs of the want thereof. The Heathen *Feſtus* cryes out, *Paul thou art beſides thy ſelf, much Learning doth make thee Mad*, Acts 26. 24. He ſpoke at a venture, he did not know what to think, when *Agrippa* who had ſome knowledge (though he would not utter it in his vindication) did imagine otherwiſe; he was better then ſome now who profeſs to believe the ſame things, and yet would have ſeconded *Feſtus* his Imputation for the latter Reaſon. In the matter of Religion (which makes ſuch a ſtir in the World, where it is not underſtood, nor univerſally complyed withall) the great Object thereof is *Spiritual and Divine things*. The carnal earthly Man doth not know what that mean, he may look upon it as the talk of thoſe in Bedlam, Spiritual and Divine, What is that? Whereas if he hath common ſence, and is exalted above the Beaſts, He may conceive thus much. What is that Reaſon which is within him? May it be felt or ſeen, and is it not only to be underſtood? That diſcourſe and inferring one thing from another, theſe pure acts of the mind may give him light and glimmering, that there are other things of the ſame nature. By this he may conſider of *Rom.* 1. 20. and then he may come to judge of all divine Revelation. The future things are ſaid to be within the Vail, and therefore cannot be ſeen as yet; but take away that, and they are deſcribed by the ſame in a more excellent degree then what

is now before us. The Promises of God are declared by Meat, Drink, Riches, Pleasures, Gold, Peace, Joy and such like, of which we now taste and feel; so the threatning by what we abhor and dread. God deals with us as Children, he trains us on by little and little; by what we do guess and understand, he leads us on to know more things then these. *The Law was our School-Master to bring us to Christ*, it taught by rudiments and beggarly elements, this was necessary to bring towards more Perfection. By him we have more knowledge of God, and more yet when we shall come to the sight and fruition of him. Who did first think of Heaven by outward things, may conceive, that there they shall have that most compleat and satisfactory Happiness, which these are a faint Shadow and Representation of. Our Bodies and all Sensible things shall be made spiritual: This Heaven and Earth shall be done away, and a new one succeed more glorious. Then spiritual and invisible things will be as perfectly known, as what is carnal and we now see. We begin with Sence, then comes Reason, and after succeeds Faith, and further we cannot go whilst here in the Body, then to conjecture, and be able to act hereby after things unutterable. *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10. What was at first esteemed Madness and Strange things, will at length appear to him that shall attend and consider throughly, the exaltation of our Understanding; to be Wonderful indeed, but yet most True. There is hardly any thing but hath an extream: And though the Soul of Man be of large extent; yet she hath her bounds now in the Prison of the Body. It is possible she may transgress and go beyond them, and so turn into Distraction. Knowledge is her proper Work, but herein she may exceed, that is, When she would find out something, which neither is to be known from the Book of Creation, nor Scripture, neither Truth nor Reason, neither from without of what she sees, nor from within her self: Where is no foundation nor ground from any thing besides. Of this sort are those wild Fancies and extravagant Notions, unwarranted Revelations, those portentous Opinions, which like Monsters in nature

serve

ſerve for nothing but make manifeſt what is Perfect and True. When the ſtrings of a Muſical Inſtrument are ſcrued too hard, they are next to be broken; Even the Faculties and Powers of knowing, may by the unadviſed owners thereof, be ſtretched ſo far as to loſe themſelves; for if people will go further, and beſides what God hath revealed, they will not be ſooner amazed and confounded then at Divine things. The ſmoke and thick cloud at Mount *Sinai*, and the bounds there ſet *Exod.* 19. *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him*, Pſal. 97. 2. The Habitation of his Throne being in Heaven, and his diſcovering nothing more of his wonderful work of Creation, then this Earth the leaſt part thereof; all theſe may inſtruct in that Leſſon of *Moſes* his Servant, *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God: but thoſe things which are revealed belong to us, and our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of his Law*, Deut. 29. 29.

Which is well worthy of conſideration, (for this makes the way to Heaven ſo ſtreight and narrow, that it conſiſts in the middle between two extreams, which is eaſie to run out of one into the other) and the Ignorant World willingly continue to abuſe the aforeſaid place; for they cry out againſt vain curioſity, as an excuſe for their blindneſs. But here may be plainly diſcerned the limits to confine all Knowledge unto, that is in the *things revealed*. The viſible works of Creation are to be *obſerved*, the Scriptures are to be *ſearched*, and the Underſtanding within us to be looked into. Whatever is contained in, or may be manifeſtly inferred out of theſe, and which may incline us unto univerſal Obedience to Almighty God; all this ought to be known. It is true what God ſaith by the Prophet, *My People are deſtroyed for lack of Knowledge; becauſe thou haſt rejected Knowledge, I will alſo reject thee, that thou ſhalt be no Prieſt unto me*, Hoſ 4 6. The Teachers may impart ſuperficial ſlight Knowledge, their own Opinions; or enlarge upon, and confine unto inſtruction of what is throughly underſtood already; but wilfully put off the *learning*, and communicating of more. *For the Prieſts lips ſhould keep Knowledge, but they have been partial in the Law*, Mal 2. 7. 9. So in the underſtanding thereof, they think of many things which they do not ſpeak out; they may juſt conſider of the whole, but they do it not throughly. Iſa. 42. 20. John 5. 39.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, John 13.17. said our Lord to his Disciples. Every one knows the Commandments of God more then he doth observe them, but yet that must be before the other: And one may have a slight apprehension of good, and yet neglect it; but if he would suffer himself fully to know, and consider throughly all the reasons that perswade to it, there he cannot so easily go back, but would perform it, as we find in things of daily use and experience. If a Man would admit of that Knowledge of God, and his Ways, which he is commanded and required to have, he would obey and walk in them. *Forty years long was I grieved with this Generation, and said, it is a People that do err in their Hearts, and they have not known my Ways,* Psal. 95. 10. so it hath been ever since the World began, and the reason is here added. That of *Titus* 3. 3,4. doth shew the very reason of their ceasing to be *Foolish, Disobedient, Deceived, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures. But after that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared.* When they were informed of that, and another Happiness provided, they changed their former course. There may be a *Professing that they know God, and in Works they deny him,* Tit 1.16. and a saying, *I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments,* 1 John 2.4. but if it is full and perfect, *This is life Eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,* John 17. 3. Again, Destruction is threatned to them, *Who know not God, and* (what is the consequent thereof) *Obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 2 Thess. 1. 8. so 1 *Sam.* 2.12. *John* 16. 3. 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *Acts* 3. 17. and several like places do import, that where is a true and full Knowledge, there will be Obedience also; as again upon the neglect and refusal of the first, is Disobedience and every evil Work, Indeed it is possible for a Man to act contrary to the best of his Knowledge, but then he is a great Fool, and Men do not usually thus; so he may do a thing upon a little Knowledge and Inducement to it, which is seldom: But he would do much more both ways, if he had lesser or greater degrees thereof; And therefore a through Knowledge as it comprehends Instruction and Exhortation is a necessary help; for so averse and froward is our nature, that we should never come unto God unless for both; as again there being those principles of Wisdom,

dom, ſelf-Love, deſire of Good, that when we are fully taught and ſtirred up, we can hardly do otherwiſe. It is not without Reaſon that the duty of Knowledge is ſo very much inculcated in Scripture, which was given to make us wiſe unto Salvation, ſee *Deut.* 4 5, 6 *Deut.* 32. 29. 1 *King* 3 9. *Pſal.* 119. 66, 73. *Pro.* 1. throughout, *Hab.* 2. 14. *Hoſ.* 14 9. *Luke* 11. 52. 1 *Cor.* 15. 34 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. & 3 18. *Ephe.* 5. 17, 1 *Cor.* 12. 8. The increaſe thereof is promiſed as a Bleſſing, *Jer.* 31. 34. *Dan.* 12. 4. The neglect hereof is threatned and condemned, *Iſa.* 1. 3. & 5. 12. & 27. 11. *Jer.* 10. 14. *Pſal.* 32. 9. *Jud.* 10, *Prov.* 27. 12. *Jer.* 8. 9. *Pſ.l.* 14. 4. *Ephe.* 4 8. *Pſal.* 82. 5. *Pſa.* 92 6. 2 *Pet.* 3. 5.

As for that common Deceit Men raiſe to themſelves from *Luke* 12 48. They do not conſider that was ſpoken of thoſe before the Light of the Goſpel came into the World, but ſaith he, whoſe ſound is gone out into the ends of the Earth, *If I had not come and ſpoken unto them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no cloke for their Sin*, John 15. 22. All mankind where-ever the Goſpel is Publiſhed, are obliged to take notice of the truths of it at their peril. Every one doth, or may know if he will, and that is the ſame thing. So he is bound to prepare himſelf under the penalty, *Luke* 12. 47, 48. The wiſe Man ſaith, *Knowledge is eaſie to him that underſtandeth.* So Obedience is eaſie to him that knoweth, for he doth more willingly and cheerfully perform the ſame.

Knowledge (as hath been obſerved of all Good) hath a ſhew of Diſquietude and trouble, as Ignorance ſeems to give Security and Peace. They cry out of many things, it is better not to know them; ſuch are the Evils and Miſeries of Life, and what may be hereafter, they vex enough when they come to paſs, we need not anticipate them before their time. This is the ſence of the World, *Who will ſhew us any good?* is the queſtion of every one: But the Contemplation of evil is a Melancholy ſubject, they have not ſo much Courage as to admit of that. But can they conſider of thus much? Whether it is not better to think of evil, then to ſuffer it? nay, if by ſo doing they may avoid it, then by not thinking at all to let it come upon them? Is it not better to walk in the Light, ſo ſee the danger and paſs by it? Or elſe to go on in Darkneſs, not to be ſenſible of any evil, but to drop irrecoverably into it?

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If there was no redreſs nor help to be found for the preventing thereof before it comes, then not to conſider before hand was the happy way. If there was no hope nor proviſion to be made concerning Death, that the Sting might be taken away; if it was irreſpectively determined how it ſhould be afterwards, for my part I do ſincerely wiſh, and would have people continue as ignorant as poſſible they can, that they ſhould not plague themſelves before hand with the fearful Expectation. The more they did know or conſider, it would give a more deep reſentment of Miſery. Let them whilſt here enjoy all the good they can, and be wholly unmindful of what is to ſucceed. Comfort themſelves for the days wherein they ſhall ſuffer Adverſity, Riot and Sport themſelves before the time of Darkneſs draws on. But I cannot tell, Whether I ſhould recommend this or no, unleſs theſe Pleaſures which now die in the enjoyment would be utterly forgotten, for otherwiſe the remembrance of them would heighten the Miſery and make it worſe. If things were ſo, we men were of all Creatures moſt miſerable. But *Bleſſed and ever Bleſſed be our God*, it is not ſo with us. He hath been pleaſed to order and eſtabliſh, that every one may be happy that will, and none is miſerable but by his own fault. All things are contrived in his Word for the Salvation of all; in every ſingle Soul there are powers implanted to work it out, and means are afforded. *Mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation, which thou haſt prepared before the Face of all people*, Luke 2. 30, 31. It is laid before them, *And all things are ready*, Mat. 22. 4. It is only left to Men, whether they will come. So they are warned to eſcape the evil. There is no way of keeping off all evil whatſoever, but there is of avoiding the great and dreadful one, and turning all the leſſer into good. There is no ſafety by not knowing it, for then it will certainly come and prevail over the Man; but by ſeeing thereof he may hide himſelf. And this can never be done unleſs by the Knowledge thereof; ſo it is equally neceſſary to our Happineſs and Safety, as of Good. This is that excellent Wiſdom fully to perceive and know all humane affairs, both good and bad; to think ſuch a thing may happen even before it doth, and prepare accordingly; in ſome things it may prevent, or get ſhelter againſt the Storm. Not to be careleſs and neglectful, ſo that he may afterwards repent when paſt remedy; to be ſure

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againſt fruitleſs Wiſhes, or the Fools ſaying; to fore-ſee what doth nearly concern him, & that nothing ſhall fall out unthought of, or unexpected. *The Way of Life is above to the Wiſe, that he may depart from Hell beneath*, Pro. 15. 24.

Men are affrightened with ſlender appearances; for this horrible thing, the meditation of evil, to him that approacheth nigh, and is acquainted there-with, is not ſo irkſome as at firſt imagined. It is the policy of Satan to keep off from all Knowledge that may do Good or hinder Evil; but when the Soul comes to be throughly ſenſible thereof, ſhe will purſue after it, and reſolutely paſs through that little harſhneſs and difficulty, which it makes a ſhew of at firſt. It is not ſuch an unpleaſant work to avoid a trouble or inconveniency, and to do this it is neceſſary to conſider of it throughly: In like manner it is to thoſe evils which would be worſe and more intolerable, if not prevented. The moſt terrible things are Death, Judgment and Hell: But there is a way found out for every one that will live unto him, to die in the Lord; and ſo he is bleſſed. By loving and imitating of him now, *He may have boldneſs in the day of Judgment*, 1 John 4. 17. for the laſt and moſt dreadful of all, he ſhall never come near it. As he may be thus ſecured when future things ſhall be preſent; ſo even now he may think of, and provide as to them, that he is not tormented at the apprehenſion of them. In this he is more ſafe and happy then thoſe heedleſs ones, who are afraid to ſuffer the thoughts of them in their mind, but blindly go on and expoſe themſelves to the full danger.

The Promiſes of God here are with exception of the Croſs, to comfort and make able to bear it, to carry us through this imperfect and miſerable condition; but thoſe to come are abſolute and gracious of enjoyment of all Good, and freedom from all Evil. Even theſe which ſeem harſh diſpenſations of Providence work together for our good, and ſo come to paſs as are ſpoken of, or may be learned out of the Word. As to thoſe future rewards and puniſhments, *The Kingdom prepared for us*, and the *Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*: We may perceive him even now ſubtilly inſinuating himſelf into the Hearts of Men, ſeeking all ways and means to keep and turn people from God, and that which is good, to hinder them from his favour and Heaven appointed for us. The *Tempter* and

Abaddon,

Abaddon doth try to hurt and destroy; he is the Author of all evil in the World. If we are afraid we shall fall by his hands, it is only our own fault; for we are called upon to come under the Protection of our God, who hath given his Word and Truth, to discover all the Fallhood and Deceits of the Enemy, and then they may be easily avoided.

The most valuable things in the World are least regarded. How doth Wisdom expostulate, *Prov.* 1. And though it happens so with her before Men, yet at the conclusion of the Chapter, *Whoso hearkeneth to me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from the fear of evil.* The reason why she is slighted, is because they refuse to hear her voice. They put it off with *Scorning* and *hating of Knowledge*; But if they would attend to her Words, the whole World would go after her, as much as she is contemned now. And this would be true of the *Power of Godliness*, as it is now of *the Form thereof*: Which indeed hath the vogue and esteem, but the other lies under despising and reproach. These are the Refuges that ignorant and mistaken Souls betake themselves unto; for it is reasonable to use the same diligence after the good things to come, as themselves seek earnestly after present and fading Delights; and to secure our selves against the Punishment threatned, which is just begun here, and fully to be manifested hereafter, as themselves are so over-careful and solicitous to avoid present and little inconveniencies.

It is easie for some to asperse what they do not understand, and others thus cunningly seek to hide their own falshood and error. Reflections come in to supply the defect of Reason on their side; and through the wicked Pride, *as slight of Men*, they would seem to pass it by as weak, which indeed is too strong for them to get over and answer. The highest Wisdom, even the *Wisdom of God* may be ridiculed; but when it is only so, it is a certain sign that it cannot be resisted. The greatest Truth may be depraved and reviled; but when it is only so, that is firm and unanswerable. And further, those do always decline from it, *By Reason of whom the way of Truth, is evil spoken*; which shew the general sence of mankind, that they approve of this as excellent, for they find fault when those persons who seem Religious, do not live accordingly. Even Hypocrites tend to the glory of our Religion, as appears to him who examines

amines throughly. But God is outwardly dishonoured by them; Either when themselves do not believe what they profess, and then what lieth in them, they turn the Truth of God into a Lie. Or they surmise before the World that the thing is impracticable, and so render him liable to the imputation of an hard Master, and that his Commandments are grievous; which is abominably false: Or when the Doctrines of God are judged of through the practices of Men, then indeed those which are Holy and Good, may seem to be Abominable and Evil; whereas they do not keep close, or pervert and turn them through their evil nature. When they who shall confess with their Mouth that God is only wise, and so is his Law; but yet not observe or transgress it out of a pretence to Wisdom and Discretion, Do not these contradict that in their deeds? And for this cause God may be evil thought of by Strangers, and that his Sanctions are not so wisely contrived for our living in this World.

The temporizing accomodating Humour, those cunning ways of avoiding present inconvenience, or saving themselves from loss and danger, those compliances and actings contrary to Conscience and Duty towards God, all these pass current with some for excellent prudential Rules, any Law or Ordinance to the contrary notwithstanding. Indeed the Commandments of our God are with great Wisdom ordered to try our Love and Obedience unto him, but not so much for present ease and security in the World. It is called the Doctrine of the Cross, *Yea, and all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer Persecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 12. Neither let any pretended wise Christians (who call themselves so) stave it off as long as they can; and when the methods of their own Wisdom are run out, or they are confounded and baffled, then only apply this to themselves. But whosoever, even in these days, will strictly and universally observe his Laws and Directions; who is fully resolved to keep a good Conscience in all things, shall endure Persecution or Reproach, and other Worldly losses or inconveniences. And yet all this (a strange Paradox!) is very reconcileable with true Wisdom; for what can be more reasonable, then to submit to a little Evil in order to a greater Good? to suffer Loss for Gain and Advantage, to willingly undergo an Inconvenience to obtain a greater Benefit? this is the same what is practi-

ſed every day. Now Chriſtians do believe the Goſpel to be
Mark 10. 29, 30. true, and then what our Lord ſaith may be relied on. *There is no Man that hath forſaken Father or Mother, Houſes or Lands for my ſake, but ſhall receive eternal Life.* That God who will reward us for the leaſt act of Obedience, even to a Cup of cold Water, will alſo take notice of whatever Trouble or Loſs we endure purely for his ſake. We may truſt him as to that: If this be fooliſhneſs we will be accounted ſo, and wait till it is manifeſted to be the higheſt Wiſdom. The promiſes for Suffering and Loſs are ſo full and many, that one may more ſafely venture on this bottom to be returned into the other World; as daily Wiſe Men do to remote Countries when Ship-wrack, Caſualty, their own Death frequently hinder themſelves from being partakers of what they certainly parted withall. Whoſoever doth not only ſay ſo, but really believeth on God, hath more aſſurance from him, *whom it is impoſſible to lie.* His good things promiſed and reſerved are altogether as worthy to be depended on. And though they ſurmiſe, the return may be long; however it is ſhort before, and certain that we go hence, and we will truſt our God for what may be hereafter. But what if it ſhould be ſaid, that as to this preſent time we are no loſers? All things are deſired for Contentment and preſent Happineſs; again, we abhor and are afraid upon the account of Evil and Miſery. Now if God doth continue this ſtill, without ſo much of thoſe outward means; if he only permits the ſuperfluities to be taken away, but inſtead of them gives greater Peace and Satisfaction then they would yield, What harm is in all this? Thoſe who *take joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods*, as ſome have done, are in the ſame or rather a better condition then thoſe who have kept them; for they have not that degree
Acts 20. 23, 24. of rejoycing. And ſo he that *can finiſh his Courſe with Joy, when Bonds and Afflictions every where abide him*, is as happy as thoſe at full Liberty; for they do not ſo. Indeed all the inconveniences of this Life are little; but when they are willingly ſubmitted unto out of Conſcience towards God, he ſanctifies and ſweetens them unto us, and we are contented as if we had them not all. It is ſmall whatever we can do to teſtifie our Love and Obedience unto God, the utmoſt is to part with Life for his ſake when it is taken away by Wicked Men: God is pleaſed to try many of his Servants thus far, to ſee what they will endure

endure for him, and to let the wickedneſs of Men go on, that he may behold what they will do againſt him. Let none object fooliſhneſs to the Sufferers; *For in their falling they ſtay on him, who gave them and all Mankind Life and Breath.* What can be more reaſonable then to Sacrifice that up unto him, which he lent them at firſt? to Glorifie God by their Death, when he will raiſe them up again and reward them? In all Chriſtian Sufferings it is to turn gainer for the other World; the more thou ſhalt endure, the more thou ſhalt be Crowned; it is a laying in a Foundation againſt the time to come, and (if I may ſo ſpeak) a putting in for a greater ſhare of Glory. The more thou art deſpiſed and abhorred by Men, the more thou ſhalt be had in honour; for cruel Mockings and Scourgings, there will be Commendations, and thoſe ſhall be healed and done away: for being Deſtitute, Afflicted, Tormented, will ſucceed greater degrees of the contrary Happineſs. I do not admire that thoſe Primitive and Bleſſed Souls, when they were lodged in the Body as we are now, and beſet with the ſame Temptations, and of like paſſions; yet did ſo deſire Martyrdom, and ſeek after Suffering, even ſo far, that they did run to a pious extream of well-meaning forwardneſs. We again decline it as much; their Faith was more lively, but we, that do ſtand in the latter days on the earth, find that decay thereof our Lord foretold; which makes Men willing to ſhift it off by lawful or unlawful means; and when all theſe fail, then only they are for turning Martyrs and Suffering for Chriſt. It is a good expedient to begin by little and little, and try firſt whether we can hold a Finger in the Flame before we expoſe the whole Body to the Fire; Whether we can endure a little Reproach, Loſs, to be forſaken, and other trifling Inconveniencies, before we come to the greater Afflictions of the Goſpel. The leaſt have their reward. If this be abſurd and ſimple Doctrine, it muſt be only ſo with Unbelievers. Let a *Plutarch* or *Epictetus* (who did ſee no further then this preſent time; who might talk, but did not know of more then the convenience of this Life) deliver that prudent Aphoriſm, 'He that accomodates himſelf to the preſent affairs is Wiſe, *But we have not ſo learned Chriſt*, Eph. 4 20. Indeed he hath taught us to flee from Perſecution, to avoid it by ſpeed; but we are to decline it by nothing, which in the leaſt tends to the diſhonour of Him and his Religion, by nothing that betwrayes Unbelief or Diſtruſt, or is any

Isa. 61. 7

ways contrary to the Doctrine he gave us. He left no Rules of Policy or common esteemed Wisdom; for that may prove an occasion to bring on sinful compliances, and after making a question whether they were so or not, see 1 *Pet.* 4. *If any one suffer as a Christian*, not according to the common notions thereof, but as it is written in the Word of God, by living according to the Rules and Directions there, And the Man is perswaded so in his mind; that which now invites and approves of him for so doing, will be his witness hereafter, to find acceptance with Almighty God. There is no great danger of being mistaken; for the lines of Good and Evil, Duty and Sin are so clearly written in the Hearts of all (especially of those who arrive to that eminency as to suffer for God's sake) that he may perfectly understand them. Such a one must for some time have done the Will of God, and then we know what is asserted, and by whom, *John* 7. 17. for outward Profession or Hypocrisie may go a great way, but not to part with worldly Interest or Life it self. Whereas sincerity will oblige on still; and he that really designs for the Kingdom above, will pass through the Tribulation which lies in the way. Therefore it is to be presumed he knows it, and cannot avoid without going out, which he will not do. It is truly said, The Cause and not the Passion doth make the Martyr; yet if he who hath no Pride nor vain-Glory, no Sinister impulsive, but is acted by the alone Principle of a good Conscience, whereof no Man can judge but himself; however, if he should be deceived as to that, seeing it is not out of wilful ignorance (for that is far from the Godly) without question God will be Merciful and reward his honest meaning to serve and obey him. An upright and sincere mind is very acceptable with him. *I will spare them, as a Man spareth his own Son that serveth him*, Mal. 3. 17. Now if a Child should do a thing with a good intent to please his Father, though he did not require it, yet still the good will and intent is accepted; the same it is of God towards us Men. If this be not true Divinity, we are left at the greatest uncertainty that can be; for we are all but Babes and Sucklings to God, the highest acts of our Soul are but ignorance before him. We cannot be Wise beyond our selves, and we take the same manner to please him, as our Superiours on Earth. And according to this is the whole Scripture, his own Revelation to mankind. *Only let us have a good mind towards God*; and the Spirit he hath given

given us is to judge and make application of his Word to our ſeveral Actions. Let others cenſure ſuch an one as a raſh unadviſed Fool, an ignorant deluded Soul, or an hundred kind of ſurmiſes; by which if it was at their diſpoſing, he ſhould loſe his Reward in Suffering for the Truth and Well-doing; yet God is Judge himſelf. *Wherefore let them that ſuffer according to the Will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls unto him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. Let others ſuſpend their verdict, and judge nothing before the time. There is as much certainty in this Duty as any, and here we may go upon ſure grounds: As heretofore *Chriſt Crucified was to the* Greeks *Fooliſhneſs*, 1 Cor. 1 23. ſo even at this day, that Appendix to it, the thing of loſs and inconvenience is reckoned Folly by thoſe who hold faſt the Name of Chriſt; but unleſs they have *denied the Faith*, they cannot really think ſo, for before them this Wiſdom is juſtified; and may be done before the Heathen World.

It hath been demonſtrated beyond all contradiction by our antient Apologiſts and Writers, that Chriſtianity is the beſt Wiſdom in oppoſition to that of Philoſophers and Wiſe-Men of the World. Theirs was defective, could not reach any aſſurance, and for the moſt part was about things of this Life; which are but Dreams and Bubbles, the exerciſes of a Childiſh mind, for all things of this World are not worthy of the utmoſt concern and regard of the Rational and noble faculties of Man, unleſs now as we are aſſured it be in order to thoſe great, perfect and durable things to come. They of old did talk bravely, but by actions did manifeſt that themſelves were not Perſwaded ſo. Though they did pretend to ſet at naught the World & the greatneſs thereof, it was becauſe they had it not; for when it came in upon them, they became Servants to it. The like we have in our days, who will talk yet higher in contempt of thoſe things, and yet more eagerly ſeek after them; who catch at what they can, get as much as they are able, and then ſpeak forth in contempt of the reſt. I am afraid this will be the Condemnation, that Men will not do that for the Grace and Fear of God, what others formerly did by Philoſophy and vain Boaſting. That we who know and profeſs to believe greater things enforced with Promiſes and Threatnings, yet will not do ſo much towards renouncing unlawful and abſtracting from preſent things,

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as they did. The Wiſdom ſet before us is greater, but Men will not believe or not conform to it: both which are unreaſonable and fooliſh. There is certainly ſome ſecret Enemy of mankind whom they ſee not, that keeps them off. Men could not do this of themſelves, for they may be aſſured, Heaven will not drop into their Mouth: it is as worthy to be ſought after as the things of this World, and doing but the ſame would bring us to the other. Only as to this nothing ſtops, but to that *One doth let, and will let until he be taken away*, He ſtands at our Elbow, & therefore let us know ſo much, bid him ſtand off, pray againſt his Temptation, go to the Word of God and we ſhall not be ignorant of his devices, and ſo be too cunning for him, as we may by the aſſiſtance offered us. If it was a matter of indifferency, we could never be ſo backward to a thing that appears ſo very reaſonable, and makes ſuch exceeding and aſſured Propoſals of Good. *Who is Wiſe, and he ſhall underſtand theſe things? Prudent, and he ſhall know them?* Hoſ. 14. 9. *And unto Man he ſaid, Behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom, and to depart from Evil is Underſtanding*, Job 28. 28.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of RIGHTEOUSNESS and JUSTICE.

THerefore *all things whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, do you even ſo to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*, Mat. 7. 12. Conſider your ſelves exactly in the ſame circumſtances and condition as the Perſon is with whom you deal, and then let ſincere and impartial Reaſon determine what thou wouldſt have done to thee, and ſo do unto him. Here is a plain Rule given to know what is Juſt or not, whether one doth Right or Wrong. *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, is the Epitome of the ſecond Table; and the particular Precepts thereof, are but to give him what is juſt and equal according to the relation he ſtands in, and that we ſhould do him no wrong in thoſe Inſtances, or whatſoever comes under them. The Prophets did mightily inſiſt and preſs to the obſervation of the Law; throughout all their Writings are Inculcations to Judgment, Juſtice and Righteouſneſs; and much Threatning from God againſt Oppreſſion, Theft, Deceit, Lying, Bribery, and ſuch like. Iſa. 1. They did unvail the Hypocriſie of thoſe, who did make pretences to Devotion, and thence think they might commit injurious Practices; becauſe they did ask God forgiveneſs, and yet retain the Sins of griping the Poor, ſpoiling the Fatherleſs and Widow, and the ſeveral acts of Unrighteouſneſs. This enraged the People, for ſo doth any thing which lights upon Luſt or fancied Intereſt: And they to conceal or excuſe their own Shame, did fall from one Wickedneſs to another; from a leſſer to a greater degree of Wrong; from being injurious to their common Neighbours, to Perſecuting their own Prophets alſo. They might thus Palliate the matter before ſhort-ſighted Men, *But all things are naked and opened unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Heb 4. 13. And by this way they did provoke him yet more. Even now, Whoſoever is an Enemy to Religion, or to thoſe ſet up in defence of it, he doth ſomething which that condemns; Jer. 7. 9, 10, 11.

demns; and therefore shews forth Spite and Malice. There doth not arise such a bitter rancour in the minds of Men against the Word and Ways of God, if it is only for Sin as to themselves, because for this they may have some Extenuation and Pity from others through infirmity or pleasing of the Flesh; *But the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men*, Rom. 1. 18. and for the several acts of the last they become destitute and odious to all that know thereof. We are strictly commanded whatever is Just, Honest and of good Report; and we are forbidden the contrary. Justice is more enjoyned in Scripture, then Piety towards God, which is in the first place; or Sobriety to our selves. Whether the holy Spirit fore-seeing it would be more difficult to keep people unto it, for they sooner decline and turn aside there being more Temptation of Worldly Advantage, then is to be had by Ungodliness; or they might mistake and suppose to have Devotion pass for an Atonement and Commutation of their Sin; Or God willing the Happiness of his Creatures as they lived in a community; yet he hath said more throughout his Word of our Duty to our Neighbour then that we ow immediately unto himself; Though in Truth all is Homage and Subjection unto God, *For we are to do Justly and love Mercy, because he doth require it of us*, Mic. 6. 8. This is agreed to be good by all mankind: Uprightdealing and Alms-giving have been, are, and will always continue Honourable and of good esteem amongst Men, both good and bad. We may see by this they have a real desire after Happiness; for they countenance what they see furthers it, and shew themselves displeased at whatever is prejudicial thereto. They approve what is just and equal, when Offices of Kindness and Compassion are done to one another; and contrariwise they seek to hinder, if no other way, yet by casting Shame on the Authors of Wrong and Injury. There is a general sence and good Nature to others, though it may be brought home to Self-Love at last; yet if he loves others also, it is no harm for a Man to love himself, he cannot do otherwise; and where all things may stand together, there is no need of shutting one from the other.

I might from this Observation just ask, if this Principle be in all; and Religion only comes on this Errand, as certainly it doth, and for no other; for *God sent not his Son into the World,*

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not to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved, that is, eternally Happy. Why then should so many thoughts arise in the Hearts of Men concerning it, as if it were a Trouble and Disturbance to them, or as it were a *Snare*? What mean those silent Murmurings, those secret and strange Imaginations? Concerning this one thing of Religion, *There are great Thoughts and searchings of Heart.* But it is only the *Divisions*, and the not complyance with it in all things, which occasions all this. There is a secret Enemy which doth all he can to raise Prejudices and wicked suggestions, to turn (if possible) all people from the good that is set before them; but he doth the greater Part. There is something in the nature of Man, which catches at every little thing that is present, visible and certain, but neglectful of what is not altogether so; though Prudence would direct that in a thing of infinite greater concern, he should also use the same Care and Caution. He doth indeed wisely as to the little things of this Life; but then he should go on as he hath begun, doing the same as to those vast concerns of the succeeding and endless Life, and then he acts like a Man indeed; for a Beast hath that instinct to take care and provision about what is before and useful unto him, and to avoid things hurtful: and so far let him use those faculties he hath, but for them which rise higher, let them be advanced to the higher end. The Principles of self-Love and willingness to be Happy, are as fit to build the Doctrines of Christ on as any, for as in the things of this World, when a Man comes to know they tend to this, he presently desires and seeks after them; so if he understands the other are for his good and security, it is then left unto him whether he will follow after and practice them. Exod. 10. 7.

None can so much as in thought accuse God for those Laws and Statutes he hath given to Mankind as they live in Neighbourhood and Society; for those things to be done between Man and Man, every one knows it would be happy living, if they were by all persons and in all things observed, that every Man might have his own, and get what he can more, that we might live Lovingly and Peaceable with one another.

But seeing the World is turned aside from this good Establishment, What shall we do now? *He that departeth from Evil maketh himself a Prey*, Isa. 59. 15. One may do Wrong to make up for that which he hath received; there is little to be got by The Answer is throughout the ending the Dilemma.

the ſtrict way of Juſtice. If one will come to any thing, he muſt make uſe of good and evil Arts; the firſt to get a fair Reputation, but it is good to have a double Advantage. All people are for living in the World as well as they can. If I had an Eſtate, or ſufficient beſides, I ſhould never have been put upon this Temptation; but it is hard to periſh for want, there can be no Sin when Neceſſity compels. Moreover, Honeſty is poor and laughed at, ſo it may ſeem neither agreeable to Wiſdom nor Happineſs.

One would admire, when things were ſo well ordered and diſpoſed of at firſt, and ſuch excellent Rules made concerning them, that they ſhould ever be departed from; But Evil preſently came into the World, the Sons of Violence and Tranſgreſſion ſprang up, Wickedneſs quickly got the greater part of its ſide. But now hereby is had the exerciſe and tryal of Good, for that could not be unleſs there was ſome of the contrary. Nay, it would not be ſo much commended, unleſs there was great abundance of the contrary, and much oppoſition as now there is; ſo that Righteouſneſs may appear more Righteous. It relies on *Faith*, and ſo is *more precious then of Gold that periſheth*, (then of the gains of Falſhood, which are quickly left behind and come to nothing) *though it be tryed with Fire* (that is with difficulty and reſiſtance) *might be found unto Praiſe, and Honour and Glory at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. If there was nothing more then what we now ſee, only Buying, Selling and getting Gain; If after this buſie Life we were to lye in the ſluggiſhneſs of eternal annihilation; nothing in the World beſides Earth; no Time ſhall be after we are gone out of the World, or there ſhould be an utter end of us; if there was nothing beſides what we in the hurry of worldly Buſineſs think of, which is evidently falſe; or nothing would ever befall us then what we conſider of before hand, as many things do now; I ſay if things were ſo, which are manifeſtly contrary, then all that aforementioned would be wiſe Counſel, and method of Action. The Men of this World run a little too faſt, they would take up that for granted which is not ſo, and then all along act upon a falſe and miſtaken Principle: for whether they firſt debate it in their minds or no, they do after that manner, as if there was no Immortality and Reſurrection; If they would allow an eternal Life after this, as it is the ſame whether they do or do not, it being not what Man fancies

fancies concerning himself, but God hath Decreed) all this stir of living in the World would fall to the ground; for then natural Reason would make this inference, That the time of our Sojourning here, if Seventy or Eighty Years, is not so much to that as the twinkling of an Eye to our whole Life; and consequently there should be as much care had to live happily for ever, as now for this short time. If both cannot stand together, there the least must give place to the greater; for more concern is to be had for a Year then for a Minute only.

Said one, Who received the Spirit which did lead into all Truth, *Know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. So what are accounted the ways of thriving in the World, are an absolute hindrance to their Title unto that. Men are to be judged by the Scriptures, and according as they have done or transgressed are to be admitted or shut out: Now this Book Condemns all the proposed Schemes of advantage. *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World and lose his own Soul? Or what shall he give in exchange for his Soul?* Mat. 16. 26. The Word of God is different from vain and common received Opinion. The Tempter first instils those principles of Dishonesty: Have they not read, how he was a Liar from the Beginning? He insinuated to our Parents that the forbidden Fruit should do them no harm; he beguiled them with a promise and appearance of Good, but we have found the contrary. The Commandments of God have a shew of inconvenience: and Transgression may seem expedient at first; but examine things throughly, and see how it will be then.

The great Objection against this Duty, and therein it hath a shew of Folly, that hereby we become liable to be imposed on, suffer Loss, and are deprived of opportunity of more Gain. Our Lord's Counsel and Command is, *Be Wise as Serpents, and Innocent as Doves*. Be cautious that you do not receive any Injury, and be sure to do none. Every Man may preserve his own, and use a lawful redress where it is taken away by Wrong. The fault found by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 6. 6. is when they go to Law before Unbelievers, but in the fore going verse he seems to admit thereof before a Christian Magistrate, or rather in the first place they should refer it to an Arbitrator. Or if it be for trifles, there one may suffer himself to be defrauded, and pass it over

as not worth a wise Mans regard, for that is not extended to little things. Christianity and Prudence are not in themselves inconsistent; but the Error is, that some frame notions of Wisdom according to the Opinion and Practice of the World, and by that would state the obligations of Duty, whereby they make the Commandments of Christ of none effect, or by distinctions would correct them. But let nothing be done contrary *to the least of them* whatever inconveniences may ensue. If we suffer Shame or Loss for the Doctrine of Jesus, we may trust him; a more enduring substance in Heaven will be a sufficient requital. It doth seldom happen that any considerable disadvantage doth fall upon any for keeping stedfastly to his Laws, when that only and no other is the Reason; or if it should, it would be made up another way here or hereafter. *The Meek shall inherit the Earth*, Mat. 5. 5. He dwells safely, and none cares to molest or disturb him. And though the baseness of some little poor Souls may extend so far as to Cheat, Defraud and take Advantage over his simple Honesty (as they phrase it) yet this is done privately and in small instances, which either he doth not know or not mind, and so lives well and contented for all. *The Unjust knoweth no Shame*, Zeph 3. 5. He may come at length to be so brazen-faced that he doth not value the judgment of Men, but so far only is kept in, least humane Law take hold of him; yet through restraining Providence he will sooner do Wrong to any one, then the universally sincere and good Man. Who did ever want Food and Raiment convenient for him, only by keeping Gods Commandments? It is somewhat hard to Flesh and Blood, but it is safe. *Blessed is the Man that trusteth in him. O Fear the Lord ye his Saints, for there is no want to them that fear him. The young Lyons do lack and suffer Hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing*, Psal. 34 8, 9, 10. It is Gods Will that they shall comply with his Ordinance of Labour, and not be *slothful in Business*; so they being in some Calling and adding thereto Honesty and Diligence, do not want what is good or necessary for them. *The Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous*, but then they must not tempt God, or expect a Miracle that he should feed them as once he did the Prophet with Ravens, but they are to use the means he hath appointed. Though we do live by Faith, and God is not willing that any thing should be made too evident, for that would destroy this noble Principle, and take off

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from the excellency of Obedience; yet to eſtabliſh our Truſt and Dependance on him, he diſcovers himſelf more then in any thing. We may as it were ſee with our Eyes his Watchful and eſpecial Providence over his own Servants; Thoſe peculiar ones redeemed from all Iniquity do get a livelyhood. Or if they are diſabled and hindred from Work or Imployment, he provides ſome other way. Still he acts moſt wiſely who lives ſo in this World that he may live for ever. *He that walketh Righteouſly and ſpeaketh uprightly, He that deſpiſeth the gain of Oppreſſion, that ſhaketh his hands from holding of Bribes*, Iſa. 33. 15. Who uſeth Lawful and prudent means according to the Trade and Occupation he is in, and rejects whatever is of Craft and Evil. It is ſometimes ſeen that he may proſper and increaſe in the World. *His Seed ſhall be mighty upon Earth: the Generation of the Upright ſhall be Bleſſed; Wealth and Riches ſhall be in his Houſe*, Pſa. 112. 2, 3. This was often fulfilled in old time under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, who had great meaſure of temporal Bleſſings. At this time it may be obſerved, whether for their Worſhip and Service of God, or the favour he retains to the Children of *Abraham* the Sons of *Jacob* and *Joſeph*, or whatever Reaſon we may in Humility gueſs at; yet they are generally in good eſtate and plenty, though ſcattered in the World. But to us Chriſtians are promiſes of better things *of the Life that now is, and that which is to come*, one in order to the other, as the divine Wiſdom thinks fit. Thoſe who are Heirs of Salvation, for whom the greater things are reſerved, do commonly live by his Grace and good Providence here in expectation and purſuit after that. More is not deſired then ſufficient for this. They look further then barely to live, but do ſomething worthy of Life, which is only towards that to come. As they get means for the firſt, they preſs forward to the high and eternal Calling.

There is much talk of living, and living well in the World; this is the principal Mark at which moſt aim, to get in an high condition, and as much as ever they can. It may be obſerved that whilſt in our Mothers Womb we grow up as Plants, afterwards like young Beaſts, we Eat, Drink, Sleep and Play till the Organs come to be fitted for the exerciſe of Reaſon, then we become Men; but yet many live like Beaſts all their days purſuing only the ſame end: and that which was deſigned to ſeek after divine things, degenerates and ſerves only to miniſter unto the

the Brutiſh part of Man. If he would keep in his honour and underſtanding, and advance further; if he hath really Prudence and Diſcretion, he might know thus much, that when the Lower ends are attained, he ſhould riſe higher. When Hunger and Thirſt are ſatisfied, what is all this for, but to ſeek after the Bread of Heaven, and to thirſt after the Wells of Salvation? When what he eats every day with his Mouth is caſt into the draught, and ſignifies no more but for the preſent, his common and daily Work according to Gods Ordinance ſupplies him with that; when he ſees this comes to no more but juſt to keep life for the time, this ſuggeſts *not to labour for the Meat which periſheth, but for the Meat which endureth unto everlaſting Life.* When our Clothes wax old and new are had, which are daily put on and off, there is dreſſing and making neat; What is all this for, but to fit us unto ſomething elſe? to ſeek unto the *Lord to be Clothed with the Garments of Salvation, and to be covered with the Robe of Righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 61. 10. *to be arrayed in fine Linnen, clean and white*, Rev. 19. 8. Doth not the Body wax old with the Raiment it weares? Hath it not the like changes? going to Bed puts in mind of laying aſide theſe Rags of Fleſh in the Chamber of the Grave; The Morning may be an Emblem of the Reſurrection; our doing the ſame things ſhews forth the Happineſs of Heaven, which doth not ſo much conſiſt in infinite and ſucceſſive variety, but all imperfection and tireſomeneſs ſhall be done away, and we ſhall have full and ſatisfactory Objects for our deſires. The waſhing and making neat prompts to *cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit.* The rubbing away the dirt contracted by the ſordes of the Body or outward things, teaches to be pure Men and Women juſt as we were made, without additional Plaiſtering or Colour. This again puts upon *adorning the hidden Man of the Heart, which is not corruptible*; and all in order to be glorified both in Body and Soul hereafter. Still Men do act but half way; this living in the World points out what is to be done towards, and as it were ſhews unto us the *endleſs Life.* This Life is lent to make ready for the other. It is an eſſential part of Wiſdom to refer all things to the moſt excellent end, to have an Eye ſtill fixt upon that, and then order our going accordingly. Wherefore do I live here theſe few days, and full of trouble? To behold the Heavens at a great diſtance, and ſee the outſide only, as we do not much more of the Earth we tread on; to

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run through that Succeſſion of Day and Night, Summer and Winter, and that ſmall variety of things nearer to us, Company, Buſineſs, neceſſary Actions, we are quickly weary with all this; but there being much more as Gods Revelation ſpeaks of, our Life was given to great ends and purpoſes, wherein the Almighty Creator hath manifeſted his own Wiſdom and Glory. And then, Is not Immortality more to be minded, then a dying Life? Is not Perfection rather to be ſought after, then to lie down under our Imperfection? If one was wholly to be given up, yet ſtill the greater good is to be preferred before the leſs; but when they may both ſtand together, nay, if the leſs is better managed when it is towards attainment of the other, this will be a mighty Argument for the equality of Gods Ways towards Men. If the Life that now is may as well, yea be better continued and preſerved by ordering it ſo as God would have it in purſuance to the eternal Life he hath promiſed, this demonſtrates him to be moſt Righteous, but our ſelves unreaſonable and fooliſh if we do not comply therewith. This is done by getting neceſſaries and conveniencies, then in the uſe and exerciſe of them. The Grace of God hath excellently preſcribed for both, *Teaching that we ſhould live Soberly and Righteouſly in this preſent World*, Tit. 2. 12.

But we are to be advertiſed of what our Lord ſaith, *A Mans Life conſiſteth not in the abundance of things which he poſſeſſeth*, Luke 12. 15. It requireth no more then Meat, Drink, Raiment, Habitation convenient for him, remembring ſtill what he is, where he is, and whither he is going. A noble Soul enrapt in Fleſh, and therefore is for the pure deſires of that only: By the *Well* and in the *Wilderneſs*; and therefore is to have a refreſhment, no continued ſitting down; ſome divertiſement and delight, but no perfect and laſting Happineſs till he is come to the place God hath provided for him. Since things are ſo as we are told in his Word, and find True by Conſideration out of it, If we might not be carried through here by going his Way, and according to his Directions, then there was ſome excuſe for diſtruſt and revolt from him, as now there is none at all. On whom may we more ſafely depend, then the God who giveth Food to all Fleſh? *Who feedeth the Fowls of the Air, albeit they Sow not, neither do they Reap*, Mat. 6. 26. much more would he feed

ſeed us alſo, as we are better then they in the Rank of Creatures; but yet more, as we would ſhew our ſelves Obedient Children.

This is the more certain way of getting a comfortable Subſiſtence, for every one both Juſt or Unjuſt, would willingly have to do with an honeſt Man, ſo hereby he hath more Cuſtom or Employment. This is ſo evident, that all at leaſt pretend and make a ſhew of being ſo, though few act according, and keep cloſe to the true rules thereof. It is juſt and equal that one Man ſhould live by another, that anothers Calling ſhould maintain him, as we are willing our own ſhould as to us: This is agreeable to the Royal and Fundamental Law; provided that no Deceit, Lying, Over-reaching or other Sin be committed on this excuſe, for under this they do ſhelter Unrighteouſneſs and Wrong. The nature of Evil is fixt in it ſelf, and is not to be done under any pretended Good. None would care to be impoſed upon, or ſerved after an indirect manner himſelf. The Sin of Diſhoneſty is ſo ſhameful, odious and prejudicial to Intereſt in the World, that thoſe who do not fear God nor have regard to futurity, will conceal or mitigate it as much as they can; for their Credit is their Livelihood, and if they loſe that they loſe all, none will deal with them. So Honeſty is the beſt Policy in this World; the form thereof is for temporal Advantage, and ſo is the thing it ſelf. It is thought otherwiſe; the beſt way is to have the outward Reputation, but privately to do any thing for Gain. This is the received Maxim, but contrary to Chriſtian ſimplicity and ſincerity, nor yet ſo very reconcileable with Prudence; for the moſt hidden Deceit, eſpecially when long uſed, will ſome way or other manifeſt it ſelf, ſo far at leaſt as to render him ſuſpected, if not known; and then he ſhall loſe more of honeſt gain which he might have had, and will not be recompenced with all the Wages of Iniquity. If it be ſtrictly conſidered in ordinary Trade or Buſineſs, how much may be really gotten within the bounds of Uprightneſs, what is to be had more, by going over, is ſo little and inconſiderable that it doth more harm then good. All Actions proceed from the mind, and as that is diſpoſed ſo are they; if to injuſtice then either by continued cloſe acts thereof, or by deſpiſing thoſe little ways of Diſhoneſty, and by propoſing ſome one conſiderable Oppreſſion or Deceit, which makes his Fortune;

tune; this is reckoned the wiſer way, by which they come to ſomewhat, when before by being exact and true in leſſer matters they were leſs ſuſpected.

All Unrighteouſneſs is Sin, 1 John 5. 17. It is the worſe ſort thereof, being an adviſed deliberate Tranſgreſſion, a Diſobedience upon full conſideration, and commonly long allowed in. This is not *The ſpot of Gods Children*, for it is wilful *corrupting themſelves*, and not of ſudden ſurprizal; and therefore far from the Godly. *Paul* confeſſeth himſelf to be injurious as he was, *Acts* 8. 3. for which he obtained Mercy becauſe he did it in Ignorance and Unbelief: but otherwiſe of all the failings of the Saints Recorded in Scripture, there is no particular act of Wrong done to the Eſtate of ones Neighbour (as I can call to mind) But ſince it hath been ſaid, Who are greater Knaves then the Religious? How many Examples of this ſort? Their Gripings and Covetouſneſs, their ſecret acts of Knavery and other Abominable doings, make all conſidering people take heed and beware of them. Many that ſeem to be ſo, have given ſufficient occaſion for this. Some by Rebellion in the State, others by private Dealings between their Neighbours have made the Way of Truth evil ſpoken of. But doth this allow of their doings? Do they not vary from it? Who can help but there will be Hypocrites? The Word of God is full and manifeſt againſt all manner of Unjuſt doing, The Rule is ſtrait and right, for Hypocrites (who would be accounted Righteous when they are not) pretend to Religion, becauſe that requires Honeſty, and under that Cloak they would cover themſelves. If their Practices are contrary, that makes known their Religion to be vain; they have only an appearance, but not the reality thereof, for notwithſtanding this ſtill remains Juſt and Good. There are three general Principles of Action, *Conſcience*, *Honour* and *Intereſt*; the firſt is a ſure reſtraint, the ſecond is none at all where the thing can be done ſecretly, as too many acts of Injuſtice daily are; And if Men are Honeſt only for their Intereſt, they will be likewiſe Diſhoneſt when it is their Intereſt ſo to be, as that often happens. The Temptation of Intereſt is ſo prevalent, that he muſt be a perfect Man indeed who is not wrought on thereby, One who is endued with a good meaſure of the Grace and Fear of God; but he that hath not, will be quickly overcome, for he who doth not ſeek his Happineſs from God, will be working it out him-

Deut. 32. 5.

ſelf; and this being the Principal Inſtrument that helps to all things of a Mans own Happineſs, he will be ſure to manage it to the beſt advantage he can: By Right or Wrong, Lawful or Unlawful means is no matter to him, who is for getting every way. There is no check nor ſtop to the violent driving on of Intereſt but Religion. Why ſhould that hinder the good of any Man? It doth not in any wiſe. It provides againſt wrongfully taking from another. But wouldſt thou ſtand ſtill, and pauſe a little.

Wherefore is the beloved and magnified Intereſt deſired? Is it not in order to the attainment of Happineſs, and if that may be had in a better and only true way, What harm is in all this? you are not forbidden to Trade or get Gain, you are required to provide for your Houſe and Family, but you are denied the Superfluities of unlawful Profit. Both the neceſſaries and Conveniencies of Life and Contentment withal, may and are only to be obtained by keeping within the fence of Duty. *The Bleſſing of the Lord maketh Rich, and he added no Sorrow with it*; So that is rather to be choſen then filthy Lucre, the great Gains of Oppreſſion and Injuſtice to which a Curſe is annexed, *Job* 15.29. & *Job* 20.18, 19, 20, 23. There may be a *Curſe in the Mouth*, and ſuch may have no true enjoyment of what they obtain this way. They are continually plagued with ſecret and inviſible twinges, which themſelves feel and ſeek to ſtupifie by Drunkenneſs, Gluttony, conſtant Company, great hurry of Buſineſs, and the other Arts of hardening. *A little that a Righteous Man hath, is better then the Riches of many Wicked*, Pſal. 37.16. He hath a more comfortable enjoyment of what provides againſt Hunger and Thirſt, is a defence againſt cold and nakedneſs, and as to them he reſts ſatisfied. Whereas others can do no more with abundance; and if they give up themſelves to their own Hearts Luſts, they may glut themſelves, but yet crave; have their belly filled, but not their deſire; They may drink on, and ſtill be dry; be ſafe from cold, but not the uneaſineſs of pride. Honeſty and Diligence do more conduce to preſent Peace and Comfort, then that diſtracting or wearisome Purſuit after immoderate and forbidden Gain. For there doth ariſe diſquietude from Guilt and Diſcontent, the firſt tormenting him for what he hath done, the ſecond making him reſtleſs to puſh forward to add yet more; and thus he knows not what to do, being toſſed between two Furies, which

which keep him uneaſie and troubled. Let Injuſtice put in what Plea ſhe will; make a noiſe for living in the World: yet both for that and being Happy here, the beſt way is to live Righteouſly.

The Lord thy God hath Bleſſed thee in all the works of thy Hands, Deut. 2. 7. He gives thee Skill and Underſtanding; and his Providence watches to prevent the miſchievous devices of the Sons of Violence and Falſhood. As none is without Afflictions of Body and Mind, ſo not without loſſes in Eſtate. Theſe are ſuffered for Tryal and wiſe Reaſons, but moſt commonly it is ſo ordered that hereby they are not diſabled from their ſeveral Employments; So it ſeldom or never happens in a good Man for his Loſſes to be his utter undoing, or to be abſolutely deprived of a Livelihood. That comes to paſs through Negligence, Folly, Prodigality, or ſome other Sin; but not by keeping cloſe to Duty. And though he may receive ſome little injuries, yet he lives contentedly, at preſent applying the Promiſe, and patiently expects the Reward for doing the Will of God. He need not return Evil for Evil, or more injuriouſly make honeſt People pay for the harm Knaves have done unto him. Theſe are for the moſt part trivial Inſtances, and our Obedience is to be proved as to them. God hath ordained that Man ſhould Labour, and he will proſper that to which he intends it, *Mine Elect ſhall long enjoy the work of their Hands, They ſhall not labour in Vain, nor bring forth for Trouble*, Iſa. 65. 23. His word doth as it were ſtand engaged that ſuch who live according to his Will ſhould be mantained: To ſupply real Wants, not unneceſſary Luſts. And it may be obſerved of the greater part of mankind, who have no certain Dependance nor Eſtate, but the caſual income of their Trade or Emploiment from day to day, yet ſtill they are provided for, ſome one way or another. So there is no need of repining at the great Landlord, whoſe is the Earth and the fulneſs thereof, for not giving an Eſtate; Why he hath given enough for all; the Fruits and Cattel (Bleſſed be his goodneſs) are abundantly ſufficient to maintain all its Inhabitants. But he hath ſet Limits, Bounds and Land-marks that every one might know what was his own. And then ſome by Induſtry obtained what others through Negligence and Idleneſs parted withal, the World going on in the uſual way as it doth now. This diverſity is ſuffered by the divine Wiſdom for try-

al of that particular Vertue now insisted on, and of others. All cannot have Estates, not such as they desire. Every one ought to be contented with that condition he is in; if he will work with his Hands there is no fear of want. Never any is driven so hard as to be forced by necessity to Sin, if he will use all lawful means first. Then Honesty is so far from being poor and laughed at, that those who observe it, are generally thriving, and have good Reputation; but if mean, yet attended with that satisfaction of mind which others have not in their abundance. If at any time ridiculed, it is by knavish Men who seek this way to extenuate their own Guilt; for his well-doing brings their Sin to remembrance. And truly this is the cause of that Reproach, Slander and Contempt cast upon the ways and People of God; not that they in any wise deserve it, but all good esteem and honour; But those who do not live accordingly, are privately convicted they are in a fault; and therefore seek to discountenance that, which they should have done. An odd way, not to be contented only to offend God by an Omission or Disobedience; but to Sin yet more by fastening contempt on his wise Sanctions, and to hinder others also.

Mark the Perfect Man, and behold the Upright, for the end of that Man is Peace, Psal. 37 37. which is more valuable then all the fine Houses or Estates in the World. Seeing it is the enterance upon an Immortal Life, it is more then enjoying the greatest Revenue for an Hundred Years. But further he hath Peace throughout his Life. *Herein exercising himself to have a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Man*, he is in favour with both: and freed from that Trouble and Vexation, which doth always arise when the Duty to our great Creator is neglected, or those just Offices between Man and Man. The Lord is Righteous in all his Ways, His infinite sovereignty over Creatures is attempered with an excellent goodness: His great Power himself hath been pleased to limit by a gracious Word, and many other things, if we could clearly understand as we shall, do manifest him to be exceeding good and loving to us Men; so we are to do one to another, *Little Children let no Man deceive you. He that doth Righteousness is Righteous, even as he is Righteous. In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil. Whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not*

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his Brother, 1 John 3. 7, 10. *That no Man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any matter, for the Lord is the Avenger of all ſuch*, 1 Theſ. 4. 6. Though we do not ſee him, yet he ſeeth us; Though we may think him to be in Heaven at a diſtance, he is there, and yet not far from every one of us: He ſtands by, and beholds all the doings of the Sons of Men, and conſidereth all their ways. He doth ſee if any one will do juſtly, and live according to the Laws he hath given; they may be broken ſecretly, but it is known unto him; The hidden things of Diſhoneſty may a little while remain undiſcerned to our ſight, but not before him who in his appointed time will reveal them openly before the World. All things are now diſpoſed of for this Life of Tryal and Temptation. *He who is Unjuſt may be Unjuſt, and he that is Righteous may be Righteous ſtill.* The Threatning and Reward are annexed accordingly. With us that are living, and for a ſhort time in the way, the thing is in ſuſpence. *And the Work of Righteouſneſs ſhall be Peace, and the effect of Righteouſneſs, Quietneſs and Aſſurance for ever*, Iſa. 32. 17.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of TEMPERANCE

In Meat, Drink, Apparel, Recreation; Of the passing away of TIME.

THis puts in mind of our imperfect and wanting Condition, that ſtands in need of ſo many things from without. The God, who made us, put us in Fleſh, and in this place, who hath ordained ſuch things to nouriſh and ſuſtain us for a while; He could alſo have kept us in Being and Continuance without them. All things are equally poſſible to an Almighty Power. He both frames the means and the end. He is free and unlimited to the uſe of them, or can perform whatever he pleaſes with ſuch means, or without any at all. Who fed the five Thouſand with five Loaves, could have cauſed that they ſhould not have Hungred at all, as he did not, during the Forty days and Forty nights, for *He was afterwards an Hungred*, Mat. 4. 2. *Man doth not live by Bread only, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of the Lord doth Man live*, Deut. 8. 3. We are not to be perfect before our time; Even now by the Divine goodneſs and appointment we are in good Accomodation by the help of thoſe outward things, as indeed can be well required for Creatures and the ſtate of Imperfection; all this is only for a while in expectation of, and in order unto greater things. *Meats for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, but God ſhall deſtroy both it and them*, 1 Cor. 6. 13. Our Feet and Eyes ſupply that to us as if we were wholly made up of motion and ſight, they are ſufficient for the buſineſs we have to do. Food and Raiment through Gods Bleſſing keep Life and Strength, and provide againſt Hunger and Cold; ſo as to that we ſuffer no decay. They ſupply the defects,

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ſo that ſtill we are rendered fit for our Maſters Service, and for what he doth require of us. They come in to help againſt thoſe Evils which would otherwiſe Oppreſs, and for a Prop when we are beginning to fall. It is manifeſt they ſhould only do unto what they ſerve, aſſiſt, but not clog or burthen; they ſhould refreſh and enable to ſtand, not ſtifle or ſit heavy upon us. Hence Temperance appears to be pure and natural; it requires what ever is convenient, but rejects and caſts forth what is more. That there be nothing wanting or over: That the Body be preſerved in its due Temperament, That it ſpring up and run through its ſeveral alterations with daily Bread, the conſtant and even courſe of *Bleſſings of Heaven and Fatneſs of the Earth*, the moderate uſe of thoſe good things God hath prepared for it. Like a † Tree planted which neither hath too much Dung at the Root nor ſtands in a barren Ground, but receives nouriſhment from the Earth, Air, Rain, kind influences of the Sun, until it grows up to full bulk, and thence it will by degrees wither and periſh. Continuance is his only to give who was the firſt Author of Being: to every thing here is the appointed time to go on during that by further Laws and Rules. By a narrow and ſtrict obſervation of things we may diſcover the Glory and Wiſdom of our God; our Reaſon was therefore given to Praiſe and Magnifie him, to know and do things profitable for us.

† Iſa. 65. 22.

Many do miſcarry and come to an haſty end by not attending this, by making that an occaſion to deſtroy themſelves before their time, which was therefore deſigned to carry them through unto the Period thereof. When *the Table proves a ſnare, and that which ſhould be for their welfare, is a Gin to take themſelves withal*: When that which ſhould water and moiſten, doth drown or over-whelm; ſo again when theſe are denied, there ſucceeds an ill conſtitution of the whole. Sickneſs doth ariſe from irregularity of Meat and Drink. And though it is commonly imputed to ſuch accidents or ſecond cauſes, yet there is the groſs and ill affection of Humours, which by that have been rendred jarring, and ſuch a thing ſets them in actual falling out. Temperance is the beſt Phyſick according to the old rule approved of by univerſal Experience ſince the World began; nothing doth ſo keep off and prevent Diſtempers: and when they are on, there is no ſuch general and good preſcription as Faſting and Abſtinence, that nature may at length expel what clogs and hath diſordered. Health

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is the greateſt good pertaining to the Body, which nothing doth ſo much preſerve as Sobriety. And this may be one reaſon why Beaſts are not troubled with Sickneſs and Indiſpoſition as Man is; the Body of both is near the ſame, but they live according to nature, only ſupplying the deſires thereof and no more; whereas he doth add Drunkenneſs to Thirſt, and Gluttony to Hunger. What brings him back to the firſt and true uſe of things, this tends to his well-being.

He that keeps Iſrael *neither Slumbers nor Sleeps*, neither Eats nor Drinks, nor is Clothed. He needs none of theſe things, for he is God in whom is all fulneſs, Perfection, Self-ſubſiſtency, Eternity, and whatever can be thought of him who is *all in all*, to whom cannot approach the leaſt evil or hurt. So Temperance is not in him, being converſant only about the uſe of thoſe things which denote Imperfection. Yet this *Fruit of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 23. makes us little and finite Creatures have a faint reſemblance to *the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh*, by reducing them to the ſtate they were firſt made in of His Image and likeneſs. We hardly know what the Soul is in it Self, being covered over with Sin and Senſuality, but when ſtript of theſe it returns to its firſt condition. It is active in a healthy and ſound Body, but is preſſed down even to the Earth with loads of Meat and Drink. Then that which is linked on, is drenched and immerſed further in, ſo is hardly diſcerned to be Spirit. For it becomes in a manner carnal and partakes of the Fleſhly part of us, which is a degeneracy and ſinking; ſo when theſe hindrances are taken away, there is a riſing up again. The workings of our Soul are naturally upwards, if the weight is removed.

Temperance doth further moderate our deſires; it doth not make them abſolutely ceaſe, for that is impoſſible, but takes away the torment of them. When gratified, they are the more eager and impatient, but when reſiſted they are leſs. This brings into that lovely temper of *uſing as not abuſing*, Not to be overcome with the Temptations to exceſs, they will become leſs by denial; and it may be as irkſome to admit thereof, as for the ſenſual minded to reſiſt it. Sobriety perceives all the good in the Creatures abſtracted from the evil: It hath all the reliſh and ſweetneſs in them, ſeparated from eructation and bitterneſs. Which keeps within the juſt bounds, and knows not the trouble

of

of going over; which frees from the pain of Hunger, and uneasiness of satiety; which preserves Health, and not destroys it. The Body is of a more strong and vigorous temper, and the Man is rendred fit for his general and particular Calling. He is loving and thankful to the giver of all good things. He doth cheerfully perform his Duty to him, and those Offices due unto his Neighbour, and that Business himself hath in the World. This Grace puts joy into the Countenance, and liveliness into the whole Man; whereas one extream is attended with heaviness and sorrow, restlessness and discontent, the other makes pale and weak. Prov. 13. 25. Isa. 23. 18.

It is hard to hit upon the exact mean wherein lies good, but generally in the denial of things is the more safe errour; in some it is Duty. *John had his Raiment of Camels Hair and a Leathern-Girdle about his Loyns, and his Meat was Locust and Wild Honey*, Mat. 3. 4. *The Son of Man came Eating and Drinking*, Mat. 11. 19. God is glorified both ways, but the latter is our Example. Who hath left direction concerning Fasting, *Mat.* 6. 16, 17, 18. And a standing Precept against Intemperance at any time, *Luke* 21. 34. But though that macerating the Body hath made such a mighty noise in Religion as a great meritorious Act; yet so much stress is not to be laid thereon, either by Command or Example from Gods Word. In the old Testament there is little or no mention made thereof by way of Command or Duty. In the Gospel little is said, unless *Col.* 3. 5. which is in order to abstain from other Sins, and if that may be done without, the Reason of the Precept ceases. And so of 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. The Body may be kept under and brought into subjection without so much pining or starving thereof. The Apostle saith verse 25. *Every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things*, alluding to those who did Dyet themselves for the *Olympick* Games: Which plainly implies, that we are to manage our selves so as to be more fit for the Service of God, and that we may get to Heaven. Now it is evident, we can better serve him in Health then in Sickness; and it is more accepted when done with a willing good Heart. If we may be still spiritual minded, not taking off our Affections from God and the things above, to set them on small and perishing comforts; If we can avoid Sin without so much rigour, If we set a part some time for Fasting and Prayer; I know not what mean those harsh disciplines, that famishing all the Life long; for it is not a shriveled skin nor pale looks, nor

a lean Carkase which commends unto God; but *A broken and contrite Spirit*, a Soul little in its own esteem, contracted and become in intire subjection unto him which hath the Body under, and both in obedience unto God. That extream Mortification hath been turned into a gross mistake and Superstition: The cruel afflicting ones self comes near to the *Prophets of* Baal, *who cut themselves after their manner with Knives and Lances till the Blood gushed out upon them*, 1 Kings 18. 28. so are the self-Whippings and Scourgings of *Pagan-Christian Rome*; and alike are the ways of the Heathen, and false Religions throughout the World. *But the King of* Israel *is a merciful King*: He doth not require these things at our Hands: *He doth not Afflict willingly, nor Grieve the Children of Men*, Lam. 3. 33. Neither should they do it foolishly themselves. What deserving is there utterly to refuse what God doth give? God would have in this place the Humiliation, but in no wise the Misery of his Creatures; He at present keeps them off from true and perfect Happiness, that being reserved elsewhere; but denies not their Comfort and Refreshment. He is not now unwilling that we should be Happy, but then we should be so puffed up that we would not have him Reign over our Hearts. He would not have us run away from those things which are set forth for a tryal of our Obedience, having as it were hedged us in by ordering that to be had in things absolutely necessary, which we cannot be without.

Of Apparel.

Another kind of Moderation is conversant about Apparel, which was designed against the pain of Cold and shame of Nakedness. This calls again to remembrance our Misery and Want, for such an help is found against it; and therefore those who place Happiness in Meat, Drink or Raiment, consider not that it is only as Physick for remedy against foregoing Evils, Hunger and Thirst, Cold and Shame, and how much better it will be when we shall be made Perfect and altogether without them, as it is to be whole and have no need of a Physitian. God in clothing us at present with Garments of Flesh, which are weak and filthy, mean and contemptible, seems to check hereby the aspiring temper of Man, for nothing is so much provided against as Pride; Though he endeavours to strive against it, making that an occasion to lift up himself, which should humble and abase him.

Job 33. 17.

The

The Word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the Heart, . Neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do, Heb. 4. 12. 13. He will judge and recompence according to the secrets of the Heart. Those who are to *discover* in order to *turn away Iniquity from* Jacob, by laying open the Aggravation and Sinfulness thereof, may by a malicious Interpretation be thought like him that *accuses our Brethren before God day and night*: But then this Charge would fall upon the Prophets, Christ and Apostles, and all faithful Teachers. The case stands thus, Every Mans final condition is to be determined by God and his own Heart: He knoweth all things, and that knoweth its own Sin. 'Tis the motions of that which commit the evil: And those who are to convince of Sin, are to reprove and not to be our Judges; to Warn, but not to Condemn; If the thing be so, they must repent and amend; if not, they only admonish and exhort to take heed, and there is no harm done. They enjoyn no Duties, but set up the Mark again which was almost fallen, to direct in the Way to Heaven; They make no Sins, but raise up the float which was sinking, to keep people from Shipwrack and Perishing. The great Policy of the Deceiver of mankind is to bring them off from God, to lose their Knowledge of him, and the Sence of Good and Evil; whereas on the contrary it hath been the Business of all true Messengers sent from him, to † restore both as much as they could. The less Conscience and particular Examination of their ways, the less conviction of Sin there is, be sure no ripping of it up from the bottom; the generality of the World think so much the better. *For ever, O Lord, thy Word is settled in Heaven*, Psal. 119. 89. Those Laws and Rules of Obedience and Sin have been long since fixed up, and all the World shall be judged by them; so they are to take notice of, and prepare themselves accordingly now they are in the way.

† Isa. 58. 12.

What Sin or Harm is in Clothes? is commonly asked. In truth none, but in the Pride and Excess of them, for otherwise the Word of God would not make express mention of them as it doth, *Isa.* 3. 16. *&c. Isa.* 32. 11. *Jer.* 4. 30. *Psal.* 73. 6 *Zeph.* 1. 8. 1 *Tim.* 2. 9. 1 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. Evil doth intermix with every thing here, even to what we are fed with and do wear. The evil accompanying Raiment is Pride, which divides it self into

forgetfulneſs of God, or deſpiſing our Brethren who are not ſo arrayed. Yet *they that wear ſoft Clothing are in Kings Houſes*, Mat. 11 8. So they may be uſed for diſtinguiſhing of Condition. *Let thy Garments be always white*, Eccle. 9.8. which intimates another end of Decency and Comelineſs. If fine Apparel doth not take off from the Love and Service they ow unto God; If they do not ſet at naught or leſs eſteem him in vile Raiment; If they do not place more Happineſs then as it barely miniſters to Warmth, Modeſty and Comelineſs; If it doth not engroſs too much time and other evils are ſeparated; then they may uſe what God hath afforded for Clothing, improved with that Art and Skill he hath given to Man. But conſidering withal, The Soul is more then the Body, and *the Body is more then Raiment*, Luke 12. 23. And more care ſhould be had for them both, then for theſe appendages to the latter. There is a Reſurrection and Immortality; and taking care for the Body, all one as the Soul, for they will fare alike, and be in the ſame condition. The Garments of Salvation and Robe of Righteouſneſs, the fine Linnen clean and white, to be all glorious within, and adorning the hidden Man of the Heart, theſe will be found altogether as neceſſary and convenient as now it is thought to deck with Ornaments and adorn with Jewels; for 'tis evident they muſt, and are deprived of theſe. They muſt *ſtrip and make bare*, Iſa. 32. 11. (as they do every night) till they put on a Shroud or Winding-Sheet, and then nothing will ſtand them in any ſtead but what is afore-mentioned. Then Duſt ſhall be the only Powder and Paint, *Inſtead of ſweet ſmell there ſhall be ſtink, and inſtead of well ſet Hair, Baldneſs*, Iſa. 3. 24. The holy Spirit ſpeaking of this Exceſs, makes particular application to Women, for they are moſt ſubject to this Sin and Vanity; they are the weaker Veſſel and preſently taken with a ſlender appearance of Good. A fine outſide and gaudy ſhew (though it is not much more then the colour of a Flie) do exceedingly tranſport them whoſe thoughts are not fixed on the true and ſubſtantial Good. Who purſue no certain end may be obſerved to catch at every phantaſtick Image that hath the leaſt ſign of Happineſs, though it be a meer ſhadow, vaniſh and next to nothing. Again who have a right ſence and belief of ſpiritual things, they do not in the leaſt eſteem of Toyes and Trifles. As *Women profeſſing Godlineſs* differ from thoſe of this World in manner of Life and Converſation, hoping to be unlike

Pſal. 45. 13, 14.

unlike them in their Death; ſo they ſhould appear outwardly not to run to the ſame Extravagancy of Apparel. They may be of the ſame Faſhion with others, but more modeſt and leſs expenſive. Not ſetting themſelves out in the ſame manner as the vain Women do of like Rank and Quality. What is ſaved this way and given to the Poor, will avail more then *Conforming to this World*, and the empty applauſe of their Acquaintance. Though people are ſo admired or envied for fine Clothes, yet the principal delight ariſes to the owners from this ignorant miſerable nature of lookers on. Good God! that the Soul which was deſigned for great things ſhould ever be brought ſo narrow and low, as to take pleaſure in bodily Veſtments! That ſhe who is brighter then the Sun, if ſhe knew her ſelf, ſhould at all mind the glittering of Gold or Embroidery! That ſhe whom the whole World cannot ſatisfie in her due ſtretching forth, ſhould ſeem the leaſt contented with what is meer outſide and colour. She muſt be extreamly fallen from her noble and exalted Nature. She muſt loſe much of her original Honour, before ſhe can ſet any eſtimation on them, which are only uſeful and convenient for the Body, but not worthy of her Care and Affection.

Temperance extends yet further to Recreations: The neceſſity of them appears in that we are Fleſh and not Spirit, that will tire and grow weary. It is as needful to Refreſh as to Eat when Hungry. We do not read that Chriſt uſed Recreations, his Meat and Drink was to do the Will of God; But we are not as he was, without Sin and Corruption. We cannot be always converſant about holy things; an Intermiſſion and Freedom is allowed as appears by bodily labour God hath Ordained, and when tired by that he affords Divertiſment. Provided, that we do not ſhut out the ſence of him from Worldly buſineſs, or deny our Subjection unto him in thoſe Portions of Good he hath given. *Be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the day long*, and then do what thy hands find to do: If we acknowledge and preſerve our Obedience unto him, and then delight our ſelves as much as we will. Looking unto the end and deſign of a thing, which in Recreation is to fit us the more for his Service, and works of our Calling: And therefore are not to be made an occaſion to turn our Hearts from him, or neglect the other. It is lent to refreſh, and not Of Recreations.

not to fill; to delight, but not to satisfie; to use, but not to rest in them; *We are not to be happy before our time.* Even this may be learnt out of the nature of Recreations, for they are hungry and empty; and when immoderately pursued, they are wearisome, and cease to Recreate. They please and divert when sparingly used, but still are not found an adequate Happiness to Man. That irksomness and not satisfying, that constant seeking after variety, though little to be had, not being contented even when one is tired with them, make known all this. Can Men feed on still and be nourished with Sauce only? These do not gratifie the Soul otherwise then by rendring the Body more fit for her operations, which cannot be always working: Now what diverts, makes them to stand still; but when she is somewhat eased and relieved, she hath an inclination to return to her proper Employment, and hath regret to be hindred. Happiness is the end that she drives at, which is kept in another World, we being only to prepare for it here in that method and way God hath Ordained. In our course we are assulted by many Temptations and proposals of Good, which would deceive and turn aside, *God saw every thing he made, and behold it was good*, Gen. 1. 31. Every thing that is not expresly forbidden, may be lawfully used; but an intermixture of evil came in afterwards, so it may be turned and abused. If Recreations are had according to the prescribed limits of Moderation, they help to our Comfort here and Happiness hereafter; but if excessively dwelt on, they tend to Distraction and Misery. The great danger of them is that then they hinder the Love of God, make to forget him, render us earthly minded and quite estranged from spiritual things, they consume precious time which should be spent in working out our Salvation, and doing good to others. The faculties of Soul are not exercised on those great and suitable Objects to which they were designed, but are taken up with little and vain things. Had we been only made for them to skip like Lambs, or with the *Leviathan* to take his Pastime in the deep, the same and ordinary endowments which they have, would have served us also. There would have been need of no more then power just to sport and play; Reason might have been spared, and the other Accomplishments of a Man. We may observe in the lower rank of Creatures after the briskness and festivities of Youth are over, they do not

leap

leap up and down, but serve only to the right end of their Being.

Of Time and the passing away thereof.

Because Recreations are commonly used to spend Time, the tediousness whereof is so afflicting to some, it can be no improper digression at least from the general Argument to say somewhat thereof. If Man did reflect within himself, and on the nature of things, he might somewhat understand what he hath here to do. All the powers of Soul and Members of Body are fitted for Action, they crave after it. Here is the Right and the Wrong, something he must do: and if he mistakes to the latter, there is Regret and Discontent. Even when he is exercised about vain and insignificant things, which must be done rather then none at all; or if about more material, in which there is some but little profit; yet still he knows he is not in his proper work. The usual scene of Employment lies in Recreations and business of Life; the first doth not so much satisfie the mind as the other, and this doth it not altogether, for there is something further which is so little regarded because wilfully shut out of the mind, and through the Craft of the Adversary, these are made an occasion to stifle it, or to divert so much from it as should be done. To speak plainly it is *God and Religion*, To seek after and know him, to conform to his whole Will, This *O Man is what thou hast to do*; and all other things which come not under here, are avocations from the *one thing needful*. Said our Lord and Fore-runner, *I must work the Work of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no Man can work*, John 9. 4. His was laying the Foundation for all to build on. He finished the Work God gave him to do, and every Soul is to work out that which he hath wrought and accomplished for us all in this Life, which is the accepted time; for the darkness draws on, in which nothing of this is to be done. And therefore if we neglect, *Woe unto us, for the day goeth away, for the Shadows of the evening are stretched out*, Jer. 6. 4. We haste on towards the Period, so uncertain is our stay here, that the Sun sets while it is Noon-day, yea at all times, so we are to be as those which wait for the coming of the Bridegroom, not knowing when it will be.

Time was given us that we might prepare for Eternity: It seems to point forth the other, as also we may know somewhat of our own frame. We have immortal Spirits which began to be

be, but ſhall never end; for if we look back upon Eternity, that vaſt ſpace which was before we came into the World, we are confounded: We that came forth in time cannot imagine that which was from Everlaſting; but who have aſſurance of continuing for evermore, We can very well conceive what ſhall be to Everlaſting and ſhall have no end. Now Time ſtands between both theſe, as a little Creek between two Seas. And this may be conſidered in the motion of the Celeſtial Bodies ſince they have been Created until they ſhall be diſſolved: And then Time is that ſpace during thoſe ſeveral Generations come and paſs through here as God hath ordained. But to bring it more cloſe to our ſelves, it may be taken for that while every particular Man is in the World. One is more to himſelf then all the World beſides; and therefore he is not ſo much concerned with others, or the days before and after, but whilſt himſelf is here, that is his Time. Whilſt he is in Life, the Springs and Wheels thereof continue in motion; ſo that if *the Sun ſhould ſtand ſtill*, yet unleſs the hour-Glaſs within did ceaſe to run, the Garments of Fleſh wax old, it would be no advantage to Man; for the moving of theſe things within determine his ſpace, and not the common meaſure of Days and Nights, Months and Years. Since the World began it was never heard that they did ſtand ſtill with any Man, but the Pulſe is continually beating towards its laſt ſtroke. *We all do fade as a Leaf*, Iſa. 64. 6. When it firſt ſprings and buds forth, it haſtes towards being blown off, or withering, and ſo dropping down. *My times are in thy Hand*, Pſal. 31. 15. during the while God ſhall hold our Souls in life, and the Tabernacle remain fit for our Habitation.

As ſure as Time now is, ſo it will be when *Time ſhall be no longer*, Rev. 10. 6. As Days and Nights paſs with us, ſo the duration of Eternity will begin. As manifeſtly as there is ſomething above the Sun, which was *ſet in the Firmament to give light upon the Earth*, Gen. 1. 17. but beyond is an eternal and unchangeable Light. *The Darkneſs is no Darkneſs with thee, the Night and Day are both alike.* We are to be Tranſlated thither, *where is no Sun, for it hath no need thereof, for the Glory of God doth lighten it*, Rev. 21. 13. ſo neither to divide the Day from the Night, nor for Signs, nor for Seaſons, nor for Years; for this is only the manner of theſe lower Regions of the World. *One Day is with the Lord as a Thouſand Years, and a Thouſand Years as one Day*, 2 Pet. 3. 8.

There

There is no reſpect at all of the numbrings of Time with *the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity*, Iſa. 57. 15. And ſo it will be when he ſhall be pleaſed to admit us there.

Haſt thou (courteous Reader) a warm and ſerious Apprehenſion of this thing? When thou art preſſed with the tediouſneſs of Time, think upon Eternity; And then knoweſt thou not how to make uſe of the flying Moments before thee? Is it nothing to ſecure unto thy ſelf the Everlaſting Manſions? no while to be allotted for getting an Happineſs which endures unto all Ages? Only a ſpare Minute and the refuſe of Time will this ſerve towards obtaining that, to which Millions of Years are but the twinkling of an Eye? Will the *Antient of days* accept of that opportunity of ſerving him, when not detained by vain Company or Pleaſures? He will not be dallied with by fooliſh and proud Creatures. Heaven and Immortality are for thoſe who *ſtrive*, Luke 13. 24. *labour*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *ſeek diligently*, Heb. 11. 6. who make it their conſtant buſineſs throughout their Life. Are thy deſires a little quickened? What wouldſt thou do towards the bleſſed Enjoyment and Poſſeſſion of them? Thou art yet in Time, upon the right uſe and improvement whereof all this doth depend.

It is commonly conſumed either in ill-doing, or doing nothing, or ſomething beſides what is proper to do. Separate theſe three Falſities, and the right end will come in of courſe. The firſt tends directly to Deſtruction and Miſery; the ſecond and third to the loſs of the Good ſet before us. Wiſdom and Experience do ſufficiently manifeſt that they cannot profit, for they come to nothing at all. The Pleaſure or Convenience of them periſh in the uſing, and appear the ſame as if not had at all. Whatever is to come, is of the ſame nature; juſt to be had, and vaniſhed away as the former things; and all will come to an end. Sin, Idleneſs and Covetouſneſs beguile Men of their precious Time; for thus it irrecoverably glides from them without benefit, and for all theſe things God will bring them to Judgment. Yea, thoſe which ſeem more ſignificative, in which conſidered abſtractedly there is no ill as ingenuous Arts, unneceſſary Learning and ſeveral other things may be uſed as Recreations only; but if inſiſted on, they are ſomething beſides the matter in hand, and at laſt tend to nothing but to further the great loſs. It would appear ſo whilſt the Man was in the midſt thereof, if he did not

go on in a blind hurry and inconſideration, but it will be plainly diſcerned towards, and at the concluſion. *I have ſeen an end of all Perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*, Pſal. 119. 96. Nothing remains in a Man, beſides what he doth in the Service of God and for the good of his own Soul. That the Body is a conſuming, but the other part a more enduring ſubſtance may be a little ſeen by this; becauſe all Acts done as to the firſt, do juſt ſerve the preſent end and then utterly periſh; they are determined with the day whatever is done in order thereto, yeſterdays Eating and Drinking doth not ſatisfie preſent Hunger. But the Soul is even now bettered and improved for what ſhe received ſome years ago. *The incorruptible Seed of the Word* ſprings up that was ſown long ſince; and though immediately at firſt it may ſeem buried, it will riſe up and bear Fruit to everlaſting Life. This is the proper and adequate thing for her Spiritual and Immortal nature. *The words of Eternal Life* make her increaſe, whilſt the Fleſh decreaſes. *He that hath my Word, let him ſpeak my Word faithfully: what is the Chaff to the Wheat? ſaith the Lord*, Jer. 23. 28. Even now the difference may be perceived, for the one doth not nouriſh like the other; this abides for ever, when that ſhall be utterly blown away.

Examine all the Actions and Deſigns of Men of whatever Nature and great Reputation they may bear in the World; though many are long in compaſſing, yet the ſeveral intermedial Acts paſs away like the trace of a Cloud. When the end is obtained, it is little, unſatisfactory and periſhing; and at length as they might have been put in mind by ſo many little Deaths foregoing, Death comes indeed, and there is an utter end of all they have done, which avails nothing at all. But the buſineſs of Religion all the Life long is Firm and Stedfaſt, Real and Conſtant, there is a ſenſible growth in Grace and Knowledge, a renewal of the inward Man day by day, a building up in our moſt holy Faith, a laying in a Foundation againſt the time to come by good Works; And at laſt it ends in Peace according as the Scriptures ſpeak, which being found true, is an earneſt and aſſurance that it is finiſhed in Glory. I humbly conceive, God therefore put ſuch a vain and tranſitory Nature in whatever is here below, that Man might the more lay hold on this ſubſtantial and enduring thing. *For who knoweth what is good for Man in this life all the days of his vain Life, which he ſpendeth as a ſhadow?* Eccleſ. 6. 12.

Nothing

Nothing but the *fear of God and keeping his Commandments*, as he concludes the whole, Eccleſ. 12. 13. What is before us, is the principal hindrance to this great and only end. We have another divine Writer ſpeaking on this wiſe, *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World*, 1 John 2. 15. One Reaſon of mighty force and cogency is added, verſe 17. *The World paſſeth away and the Luſt thereof, but he that doth the Will of God abideth for ever.* All our Life from Infancy and Childhood to the preſent day, whether in Manhood or Old-Age, to Forty, Fifty or Sixty Years is but as yeſterday. Of the things heretofore done unleſs relating to our Immortal continuing part, Nothing ſurvives but a faint remembrance; Many more are forgotten as if they were not done at all. *For the time paſt of our Life may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles when we walked in Laſciviouſneſs, Luſts, Exceſs of Wine, Revellings, Banquetings*, 1 Pet. 4. 3. Call to mind all the Enjoyments you ever had, and what doth reſult out of them at this inſtant? You are not deſired to make the Reflection in Sickneſs or on a Death-Bed, but even now in the day of Health and Fruition. Are they not the very ſame, as if never perceived or had? Thou canſt think upon ſuch a day that was Paſt in Joviality and Merriment, and another which went away in vexation and dulneſs: Compare them both now, And what advantage hath the one over the other? There is no difference of Happineſs or Miſery as to the paſt.

God hath ſo ordained, that according as we ſpend theſe days of Vanity in his Service and Obedience; or if in the neglect thereof, ſo there abides an eternity of Pleaſure or Pain. And therefore it muſt be the greateſt Wiſdom to improve them to the utmoſt for attaining the Eternal Good, to lay hold of every opportunity for Well-doing, to do all things in the firſt place to ſecure the principal end, and then to husband every moment, to continue in all Duty, to abound in every Vertue and good Work, that we may be found accepted of him who *Rewards every Man according to his Deeds.* It is an exceeding ſatisfaction to look back upon well ſpent Time, when ſome things have been done rightly heretofore, he is for ſecuring the preſent, and hath a joyful Hope and Expectation further on. Whatever trouble and wearineſs is in the Chriſtian courſe, thoſe Temptations and

Tryals, the evil usage and inconveniencies from the World, all these go off, making a way for a greater Reward. *But call to remembrance the former days in which ye endured a great fight of Afflictions*; Think upon those Reproaches, Hardships and Difficulties you have suffered; the irksomeness of them is past, the pain is gone, but still God will not forget them: for your denyal of Pleasures, Profits and Honours, it is now the same as if you had catched at them all. *In keeping the Commandments there is great Reward*, Psal. 19. 11. There was a concomitant good and satisfaction which you had; for the inconvenience or disquiet occasioned not through them, but the Devil, your own Corruption, or this wicked World, (God suffering it so to be to keep his Servants here in Tryal and Warfare) that also is over and gone, and appears to be the like as if you had endured none, or Pleasure instead thereof; but further on is a day of Recompence which will make amends for all.

The Ungodly are not so, Psal. 1. 4. They are for the *Pleasures of Sin for a Season*, for all the profits of Obedience and Transgression; as sure as Gods word is true, there doth belong to them an Eternity of Sorrow and Repentance: an Hundred Years pain is a sad requital for the joy of a Minute. But take them whilst their day of Rejoycing lasts, as to the past the pooreſt Beggar is as Happy as they, all the pleasure of their whole Life being no more then last nights Dream. It is finished, and an end put to it hitherto; all the pretended good vanishes away immediately with the several Acts. They dare not call to remembrance for Anguish of mind and sad Sighing, they are more afraid to consider further on. They desire to live over their time again, not that they did find it altogether so pleasant, but to be further off from what is behind; this wish is as fruitless, as it is tormenting. The longer they continue to follow after sinful Pleasures and Profits, *They Treasure up Wrath against the day of Wrath, and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God*, Rom. 2. 5. *Now consider this ye that forget God, least I tear you in pieces, and there is none to deliver*, Psal. 50. 22. Let the time hitherto suffice to have Sinned and Disobeyed your Maker; But do so no more, enter upon another Course of Life, walk contrary to the former. In that vast difference of the Actions of Men as to Obedience and Transgression, the Conveniency and inconveniency, the

Pleasure

Pleaſure and Pain paſs away with the very Acts; but the Good and Evil, the Commendation or Guilt, the Reward or Puniſhment they remain.

When things in this Place are done and over, they are exactly the ſame as if they had never been at all; and ſo is the nature of whatever is meaſured in Time, but Gods Works are ſtill worthy of himſelf. *For behold I Create new Heavens and a new Earth: and the former ſhall not be remembred, nor come into mind*, Iſa. 65. 17. They ſhall be much more glorious, ſubſtantial and enduring. We that are Creatures of a ſhort Time here on Earth, ſhall alſo with the Tranſfiguration of the whole be advanced, and made capable of being for ever. When things are firſt done in a leſſer degree in order to a greater; When they are carried from Imperfection to Perfection; When they are launched out from Time to Eternity, this raiſes the greateſt Admiration of the Wiſdom of the Agent, *O Lord how great are thy Works? thy Thoughts are very deep*, Pſal. 92. 5. *I know that whatever God doth, it ſhall be for ever, nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it, and God doeth it that Men ſhould fear before him*, Eccleſ. 3. 14. There is no annihilation in things without Life, ſo there may be no utter end in things with Life. We have no expreſs Revelation that Beaſts, Birds and Creeping things do Abſolutely and Eternally Periſh. And as there is a ſtrong deſire in us of being for ever, ſo the ſame inſtinct may be there ingrafted. How know we, but God to manifeſt his own Glory and Goodneſs may in the *great Renovation of all things*, raiſe them up alſo to an higher ſtate anſwerable to that they had here? See and Conſider well of *Pſal.* 104. 29, 30, 31. 2 Cor. 3. 10, 11.

We ſee things come into Being, which before were not at all; ſo to us they ſeem to ceaſe again, and juſt the ſame as if they had never been. Such is Man himſelf, whoſe Reſurrection we do not behold as yet, but it is made known to us from God that it will be; and obſerving the like in Nature, and even our Reaſon inferring the ſame, which bears a leſſer Teſtimony unto Faith, that all things indeed are ſo. Time and Motion do now divide the World, and this tends unto, and as it were ſhews the *Eternal Reſt*.

Of all the Revolutions of the Sun over our Head we enjoy nothing but the preſent. Thoughts many run backwards or forwards, but the impreſſion of them now affects; and ſo it is more

more of things of ſence, they Delight or Torment only whilſt had or ſuffered. The preſent ſoon paſſes into the condition of paſt. Like Water that runneth apace, the Streams are gone whilſt ſeen, others ſucceed which are juſt looked on. One thing is catched at, and the other drops away; and ſo the one part periſhes, whilſt the other is had. There is no Time like the preſent, and yet it is the leaſt of all; for compare it to what hath been, and ſhall be, and it is but a Moment to Years and Ages. It is ſhort, but the tediouſneſs thereof moſt Afflicts. Thoſe Paſtimes which are ſaid to make the Time paſs away, do it no otherwiſe then by taking away the Thoughts thereof. So it is in Buſineſs. Time in it ſelf always paſſes with a certain and equal ſpace, but idleneſs makes moſt to think thereon, and ſo it ſeems to delay. Which ſhews how Mans Nature is deſigned for Action, and abhors Miſery; for he is Tormented with the tediouſneſs of Time, wiſhing that would haſt away, when he is free from the one and oppreſſed with the other. Which prompts him to his right end, and to that he is further quickened by Conſideration of the Threatnings; for if the leaſt evil is ſo irkſome and grievous when it is now light for a moment, yet that is deſired to paſs away, or the removal thereof; much more ſhould he endeavour to avoid the exceeding and eternal Miſery. When our mind is reſtleſs and uneaſie, it is a ſign that we are not about our proper Buſineſs, not in the right way, nor going to that place where all are called and invited. But when our Spirit is throughly pleaſed and ſatisfied, when we can prove our ſelves and rejoyce in our own work, then things are as they ſhould be. There is a natural and ſtrong Inclination in the Soul to be Happy, ſhe is for doing thoſe things which tend to that, & is vexed at what is contrary or hinders. *Commune with your own Heart upon your Bed, and be ſtill*, Pſal. 4. 4. Enter a little upon Retirement, and get free from the Diſturbance of outward things, and then conclude what is to be done. The ſhortneſs and determination of all things of this World, doth manifeſt that they are not the proper end of Man; they either go away from him, or he from them. And then what Prudence is it to be ſtill doing which profits but little at the very inſtant, and nothing at all afterwards, which thruſt out greater concerns, that are now to be begun and to remain for ever?

God now Commandeth all Men every where to Repent, Acts 17. 30.

The

The Language of *Canaan*, like the Author thereof, runs in the preſent Tence, which though it may be underſtood of this Life, this being the ſame to the days of Eternity, as this Minute to all our Time here; Yet ſeeing we live in this point only, Whoſoever doth the Work of God, doth it at the preſent Time; for whatever we do is preſent and juſt before us. And therefore it is a fooliſh delay and excuſe with which the Devil deceives reaſonable Creatures, who care not to do a thing now, but hereafter. Whereas if they are againſt it only upon the account of its being preſent and would put it off, they might know; Either the future opportunity will be, or not; If the firſt, then it will be alſo preſent with more diſadvantages and difficulties; if not, then they Periſh and are Miſerable for ever. So much of their Life is already ſlipt from them: Such opportunities have been loſt of receiving a greater Reward which are gone irrecoverably in vain and uſeleſs things. *Again he limiteth a certain day, ſaying in* David, *To day after ſo long a time, as it is ſaid, To day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts*, Heb. 4. 7. Then they are to bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance, to grow in Grace and Knowledge, to continue in all Obedience, and be Watchful that he in no wiſe offend the infinite God. They may ſeek out and embrace all occaſions of doing Good, and be ready to the performance of it. *Forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before*, Phil. 3. 13. *Unto which Promiſe our twelve Tribes, inſtantly ſerving God day and night, hope to come*, Acts 26. 7. The Vanity and Tranſitorineſs of our condition in this World, may be ſomewhat taken of by real and enduring Actions. The Sollicitations to Evil may be more eaſily avoided, becauſe they are momentary and ſudden. Thou, O Man, art made for greater things, Thou art paſſing towards an Eternal Happineſs, Have nothing to do with ſinful Divertiſments, *Dearly beloved I beſeech you as Strangers and Pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly Luſts which war againſt the Soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. The Pleaſure ſoon after is the ſame as if never had, and it would have hindred in the Good Way. Here is the Chriſtian Life, this is to make uſe of the preſent Time: Then you may with Comfort and no Sorrow think how it haſteth away. We muſt unavoidably lye down under the Laws of Mortality. Whoſo doth theſe things is not troubled about that, but though it ſhall be placed in the Duſt, ſtill he lifts up his Head that his Redemption draweth nigh. *Our ſelves alſo which have the*

firſt

first Fruits of the Spirit, even we our ſelves groan within our ſelves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body, Rom. 8. 23. We are not yet come to our Reſt, nothing here doth truly ſatisfie, but what comes from above; the ſame thing returns over ſo often that we are even weary of it. *We are confident, I ſay and willing rather to be abſent from the Body and to be preſent with the Lord. Wherefore we labour that whether preſent or abſent, we may be accepted of him*, 2 Cor. 5. 9. Reſolving ſtill to do our Duty. Whether God hath more for us to do, or to make us more deſirous of Him and his Kingdom, or to prove us longer, or to exerciſe our Patience, after we have done his Will we may be aſſured he hath wiſe and good Reaſons for our tarrying here a little longer. We ought to be quiet and thankful, not knowing how ſoon we may be removed hence, our Warfare accompliſhed, and our Sin pardoned. The particular Seaſon is not for us to know, it being Gods Attribute of ſeeing things to come, as he manifeſts by ſo many Diſappointments of our own fore-caſts. We are to keep within our bounds of Creatures, to ſee no further then he hath ordained. Not to reckon upon a longer Time of ſtay then we are certain of, which is not one Moment longer then we have and do now live. Did we throughly conſider by how ſlender Threads Life is tyed, which may be broken from Caſualty without or Diſorder within; but One holds our Soul in Life under whoſe good Providence we live; So we are ſatisfied, but not confident. Did we again reflect that he can ſtir up a Diſeaſe from within, (there is no need of pouring down Judgments upon us, as he did upon the Cities of the Plain) he may ſuffer ſuch an evil Accident to befall us, or to be Conſumed in our own Folly, we would tremble and fear to do Wickedly againſt him: *We ſhould not dare lift up our ſelves againſt the Lord of Heaven, the God in whoſe hand our Breath is*, Dan. 5. 33.

It is a vain and fooliſh Preſumption to Sin yet more, becauſe he counts of ſo much Time to live, being Young, Luſty and Healthful; or to be puffed up with preſent Enjoyments, for they ſhall continue ſo long. But admit God ſhould ſuffer the Light to burn clear out, though he can extinguiſh it in the mean while whenſoever he will, yet all will be waſted out: If they make theſe outward things an occaſion to forget God, or behave themſelves contemptuouſly towards him, and he ſhould be pleaſed to permit

permit thereof; What he ſaith by his Prophet is true, *The things that I have given them, ſhall paſs away from them*, Jer. 8. 13. The fancied good days will be all vaniſhed and gone, as the paſt have been already: *That can be no Happineſs which hath an end.* Nor whatever the Senſual Worldly minded think, can there be any in departing from the Lord. We may in general judge thus much of our Time to come in this World, by remembring what hath been already with us, or happens to others of ſuch years, Condition, and Circumſtances; it may be ſomewhat like with us, for there is no great variety in the things of this World: we have Seen, Heard or Read the like fulfilled in our Brethren. As the paſt hath, the preſent doth, the future will paſs away in the ſame manner till the laſt Hour comes and ſhuts up all; as this doth all the paſt Time of my Life in which I am Writing this. An end will come. *But this I ſay Brethren, The Time is ſhort, it remaineth that both they that have Wives be as though they had none, and they that Weep as though they Wept not, and they that Rejoyce as though they Rejoyced not, and they that Buy as though they Poſſeſſed not. And they that Uſe this World as not Abuſing it, for the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31.

CHAP. XVI.

Of COURAGE.

TO bring people out of the wrong and miſtaken Apprehenſion of things, to help ſomewhat towards their Good, it will be neceſſary to explain what Courage is, and how it promotes their Happineſs. Many excellent things have we heard of this Vertue, but ſtill as to the particular nature thereof moſt are ignorant, Extolling they know not what, they know not wherefore. Neither ſhall the due eſtimation thereof be leſſened, ſo it be juſtly ſtated as it is for the ſecurity and well-being of Mankind; for even this Temptation the Deſtroyer makes uſe of to inſnare and beguile Souls unto himſelf. They are taken with nothing ſo much as what looks great, To deſpiſe Evil and laugh at Fear, not to value their own Lives, to run on with a certain blindneſs and hurry towards the land of Darkneſs. Not to regard the worſt things that befall the Sons of Men, or threaten afar off; all this he hath gotten to paſs for Courage and Magnanimity in the World. And Thouſands deluded with this falſe Imagination of things come to *dye as Fools*. They did not mind the things that were told them, as a Man is Cheated of himſelf, ſo are they who ſo paſs through this World, as if certainly there was an end of them and no more. Their doings turn upon this Point, Whether there be an Immortality and Reſurrection. Which themſelves do not abſolutely disbelieve, but not examine nor conſider of. What vaſt Multitudes have been cut off before their Time, by Engaging themſelves in unneceſſary Wars, Duels, Revenge, and many more by the murdering Sins of Gluttony, Drunkenneſs and uncleanneſs. All theſe make a ſhew of Courage. Tuſh they are not afraid of Death, or what may be afterwards. They would

would not ſeem concerned for theſe things. This their way is eſteemed Gallantry of Spirit, a Noble Reſolution, a Worthy Temper: But what if upon the ſtrict ſcrutiny it ſhould appear to be Folly and Madneſs? ſtrip them of their Armour and Habiliments of War, look underneath, and we ſhall ſee a dull inconſiderate Soul under the vizour of Courage.

That properly conſiſts in the middle between Fear and Boldneſs, for it is Miſerable and fooliſh to fear where no Fear is, it is often an hindrance and keeps off from obtaining Good, and therefore true Reſolution drives away all this; ſo on the other hand, to thruſt ones ſelf upon Evils is meer raſhneſs, for it proceeds from Ignorance and Inconſideration of them, and that is an inſenſible Boldneſs, like the Horſe they ride on *to ruſh into the Battle*; Or if they have a little fore-ſight, and will dare on through Pride of Heart, this is Folly. In every thing a Wiſe Man takes in Hand, He firſt debates, Whether the Good he ſhall gain, will be greater and weigh down the Evil he ſhall ſubject himſelf unto? Whether the talking Breath of others which perhaps he hears not, or if he doth, would but ſlightly affect him, yet this will not make amends for ſenſible and laſting Pain. Or if he goes further to give up his Life, Is it Prudence by having not made preparation before (as commonly ſuch is the caſe of thoſe we ſpeak of) to plunge themſelves into that dreadful uncertainty of the other World for a light and ſhort Commendation in this? and here they will be forgotten, but their Souls will be ſtill mindful, and it may be with Anguiſh Condemn them there, for what they ſought to be applauded in this.

This Argument is to be applyed to thoſe who erect wrong Principles of Action, to prevent Mens making themſelves Miſerable; but when they are ſet aright as in Obedience to God, or comprehended under that, in Duty to the King, this ſame will turn on the other ſide; for there the promiſed and aſſured Good is much greater then the Evil expoſed unto, as may be further ſhewed anon. If there may be leſs Lye and more Truth, that reaſonable Creatures may not be deceived with a Shadow and Appearance only, but lay hold of the real Happineſs: That foregoing the falſe, they may learn the true Courage. Unleſs it be guided by Wiſdom it brings no Good, but Harm unto Men. Some Imagine theſe ſtand in oppoſition; A Wiſe Man is ſeldom

Couragious, for he quickly perceives the danger, and thence uſeth means to prevent or not to expoſe, which is contrary to what is commonly called and eſteemed Courage.

But if we conſider that Eſtabliſhment and Diſpoſal of things God hath fixed, how they are exactly fitted for this Life of Tryal and future Reward, there is a Wiſe and Wonderful agreement and connexion of them all. Pleaſure and Pain are the two Hinges on which all our Actions turn. God, *Whoſe Thoughts are not as our Thoughts*, takes a contrary method to be glorified in his Creatures, by requiring them to go againſt what they are commonly inclined unto. His Commandments are made up of Negative and Poſitive, what he forbids, and what he enjoyns: In the firſt is a ſemblance of Pleaſure, and that is to be reſiſted; in the other is a ſhew of Irkſomneſs and Evil, which is to be choſen and got over. Here is the exerciſe of our Courage, for it is neceſſary to the keeping of the Commandments. *Be ye therefore very Couragious to keep and to do all that is written in the Law of* Moſes, *that ye turn not aſide therefrom to the right hand or to the left*, Joſh. 23. 6. So of whatever is Commanded by Chriſt in his Goſpel; Who hath further manifeſted an exceeding Reward and precious Promiſes, which ſhall be certainly fulfilled. Theſe things indeed are not ſeen, and therefore the Worldly Man knoweth them not, but they ſtand upon the ſame Truth as all Religion doth. It is evident there are deſires and faculties in us which reach further, and are capable to ſeek after greater things then the greateſt here; there are vaſt powers of Soul both to will and to do, and there is ſomewhat provided anſwerable for them, they were never put in to no purpoſe. All thoſe Generous and Honeſt Actions in reſiſting of Evil and following Good, are more then labouring for the Wind. An empty ſhort applauſe, which vaniſhes with the Breath that gives it being, is not a ſufficient compenſation from them. Moſt commonly they have not ſo much as this, for indeed the Faſhionable Piety, and Phariſaical Holineſs may be *highly eſteemed amongſt Men*; but the ſincere Acts of Goodneſs, that Zeal for God and Approbation of ones ſelf unto him only, the oppoſing Corruption, meet with Diſhonour, Hatred & evil Report from the World; ſo the more excellent things have no preſent Encouragement or viſible Benefit, and there is need of much Reſolution to perform them;

them: for the Difficulties and disadvantages are seen and felt, but the Crown is afar of, above the Clouds, and not to be seen with Mortal Eye, Faith makes it as certain as if seen, a noble stedfastness of mind that will not be shaken nor terrified with present Hardship and Inconveniencies, which is to be learnt by Diligence and Exerting it self in lesser Acts before, puts upon doing of those things which are necessary to the obtaining thereof. Set your Heart to this, that all Gods Revelation is true; and then be *stedfast, immovable* in doing thereafter. *Add to your Faith Vertue* (the Original Word properly signifies Courage) *and to Vertue Knowledge*, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6. Implying, that a real Perswasion that these things are so, an unshaken Resolution of Soul, which is not afraid of any amazement, and goes not rashly on but understands what he doth, this makes up the Christian Courage: Which differs from that according to the World, for this is after a little Temporal Good, the other in pursuit after a Great and Eternal one. The utmost here is uncertain, for many labour after what they do not receive, and if they do, it signifies not much when had and fades away; But to us he is *Faithful that promises*, if we indeed strive and perform the Conditions. It is worthy of our Thoughts being that we have not here, a full satisfaction which shall not be taken from us, nor we from that. *Be thou Faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* It is reserved in the Heavens for us, The Inhabitants of the Earth see the outside, they die and go away; Many of them (would God they were more) perform the Work he requires of them; we all depart hence and shall find whether he will fulfil his Promises, for which now we have his Word and his Oath, *Two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie.* Certain it is, that those several designs of Pleasure, Riches and Honour are little, unsatisfactory, pass away and come to an utter end. When our selves act upon probable, yea, assured great and rational Principles; Others have nothing but the multitude and common Practice to Recommend them: How then comes that wide difference of the Actions of Mankind? so many are led away by the worse, as manifestly appears by the least Reason and Discourse; and themselves at length find by sad and too late Experience. The Apostle in the forementioned Place after summing up the Christian Graces, saith, *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar of*, 2 Pet. 1. 9. He is wholly taken up with present and sensible things,

things, which faſten his Eyes down to the Earth and hinder looking up; whereas they were made to look upwards all one as downwards, to ſee aſar off as near at Hand: His underſtanding was given to apprehend things to come, and make reflections upon the paſt, to conceive and know things proper for her; To ſeek after and work out our true Happineſs, not only to mind periſhing and trivial Conveniencies; to propoſe and follow after an end which is worthy, and not ſtill to be deluded with the vain Fancies and Opinions of the People. There is nothing which is ſeen and commonly practiced among Men, but may be made an Argument for God and Religion. Himſelf in the wiſe ordering of things hath been pleaſed to Eſtabliſh it ſo, that Men might have greater Motives and Exhortation to come unto him, and be left more inexcuſable if they do not.

As for thoſe of a Generous temper, who are acted by a ſence of Honour, who pretend unto Courage and Greatneſs of Spirit, in their propoſed ends they rub through Difficulties, and go on ſtill: If we examine them in their very nature upon what grounds of Probability they are undertaken; Theſe are long in expectation, they do many things for what is *a voice* and nothing elſe; or a Rattle which they know not how ſoon may be taken from them, or they from that; or thoſe delectable things which expire like Lightning, or the dim light of a Candle, which gives a faint Reſreſhment but wearieſome, which only provides againſt a continual Darkneſs of Soul, and of all theſe there muſt be an abſolute Deprivation for evermore. There cannot be uſed too ſlighting Compariſons to manifeſt how ſhort theſe things come of the true Happineſs of Man, which alſo are of his own Invention and going after: But if he would do the ſame for what God hath ſet before him, in complyance with the Divine Will what others do out of their own; uſe the ſame Conſtancy, and be contented to live by Faith and Hope, as they do by Expectation; not ſink under a little doubting as they go on notwithſtanding their many Diſappointments, then he may accompliſh his whole Warfare on Earth. In all the ſteps of his Chriſtian Courſe let him be fixed and taken up with that of the Pſalmiſt, *Wait on the Lord, be of Good Courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine Heart: Wait I ſay on the Lord.* Pſal. 27. 14. There is much need of it in performing thoſe ſeveral Acts of Duty, in reſiſting the Allurements of ſenſual Pleaſure and the aſſaults of Evil, To chooſe

Labour

Labour and what is irkſome to Flesh and Blood, To take up the Croſs, ſuffering Reproach and Perſecution, to be ſubject unto hatred and ſolitarineſs, To incur the Diſpleaſure and Evil intreaties of Men, rather then be carried away by them in Sinful Complyances, To conſtantly ſpeak out the Truth, and thereby to draw on Hatred, ill-will, leſſening of Reputation; all which might be declined by little Acts of Excuſe and Diſobedience. Which he will not admit of who is fully reſolved to pleaſe God in all things. There are many things at this day which will ſufficiently exerciſe Courage to go through with and overcome. When his Good ſhall be evil ſpoken of, his fixed purpoſes not to offend ſhall be called Humour, what are the effects of Faith and Love ſhall be reputed Ignorance; To Arm our ſelves againſt all *hard Speeches*, Not to be *afraid of the Faces and Frowns of Men*, not to be ſhaken with *the Blaſt of the terrible Ones*, to adhere univerſally unto the Will of God rather then do what others would have, and further not to *love their Lives unto Death*, entertaining it in the moſt terrible and afflicting manner, and many other inſtances might be named, whereby Holy Men have, and do act Valiantly; Not to be frightened, but willingly ſuſtain Evil and Hardſhip. To do worthily for God and his Glory, againſt all oppoſitions of the World and powers of Darkneſs: yea, the ſeveral Acts of the Chriſtian Life are more properly Courage, then is to be found in thoſe generous Actions according to the eſtimation of the World. A wiſe Man in what he takes in hand propoſes what good will come of it: If it ſeems uncouth and contrary to his nature, yet the Proſpect of Good ſhall back him on. Now he that doth not think the Recompence of Reward from God is as High, Excellent and Worthy to be ſought after as a little Honour, Wordly Pelf or Reſt, it is becauſe he doth not underſtand or not believe it. There is no good even here to be had without Trouble or Labour, ſo it is in the things of God. There muſt be a *Striving*, *working out our Salvation*, *giving Diligence*, which is more unpleaſant and aukward to the Fleſh, than ſecular deſigns and enterpriſes. Yet this is not eſteemed fortitude amongſt Men, but on the contrary, leſſened and deſpiſed. It is no matter what they think, but what God will judge at laſt; their Opinion will do none, or a very ſlight Good, but his approbation is Life and Happineſs. Things ſhall be at length *naked and opened*, they ſhall be throughly diſſected and laid before the

the view of all, and then they will appear contrary to what they do now. The secrets of all Hearts shall be made known, then private judgments shall be discovered against what they seem now outwardly to commend, The close Acts of the mind shall be brought to light, That Hatred and Averseness to God shall be manifested, which was the cause of their Contempt, Sullen Silence or speaking evil of the things pertaining to him. That wilfull and affected Ignorance, that partial knowledge of considering one side, and obstinacy not to go further, that self-Conviction which was stifled shall break forth, and then will appear another face of things What shall at last be fully disclosed, would somewhat even now, if Men would suffer a particular Examination out of the Word of God, the very Truth and Reason of things. Christianity will evidence it self to be greater Courage, then what passeth for it in the judgment of the World. Which is sign of the more resolute Spirit, that both fore-sees and considers the Evil and yet subjects it self thereto upon assured and beneficial grounds as did the Martyrs, Confessors and godly Sufferers; or those who go on with a certain Violence, without Knowledge and Consideration, as do others? Who can lay down their Lives with a deliberate choice, retaining their perfect Reason and Sence, or those in a sudden Passion and heat of Blood, who are pushed on by Malice (like a spurred Horse leaping down a Precipice) or foolish Pride, who make themselves half Drunk and then go on not knowing what they do. But consider all the circumstances of the Christians Actings and Sufferings, and his Courage will be found more Real and Eminent. *Through God he doth Valiantly*, Psal. 60. 12. Whose Grace is sufficient and inspires him with an Heart to overcome all difficulty and danger.

Now that according to the World if strictly surveyed will be reduced very low, for abstract that Disposition of Children and Mad-men, who are not sensible of the danger, and therefore dare rush upon any thing; If they be neither *Fools nor Blind*, as not to know nor see any thing; If their Souls be not rendred Earthy through Sensuality, and so fear not; If they are not quite stupified when the Heart is become *like the nether Millstone*, which doth not tremble because it hath no sence; If they have no need of Wine nor strong Liquors to support. If all Disguise and Hypocrisie could be discovered, and their concealed Fears seen

when

when big words make a ſhew of the contrary, and are uſed as an Artifice to hide them: Take away from them all outward Advantages and Helps, and they will be as other Men; keep them from the opium of continual and immoderate Eating, let them renounce the aſſiſtance of ſtrong Drink, obſerving only the juſt rules of Temperance. And then ſee, whether their Courage will not grow faint and languiſh. Were that predominant thing of Pride rooted out, which makes them endeavour to ſtifle their Fears: Then they would be brought back to the common nature of Mankind, which they would lift up themſelves above by the aid of the aforeſaid things. We ſee evidently when theſe fail, they are the ſame as others. As in Sickneſs or in a ſober approach of Death, but more certainly when their Souls are ſtript naked and ſent into the other World, no mention is made of their Courage in that place, *And the mighty Mens Hearts in* Moab *at that day ſhall be as the Heart of a Woman in her Pangs*, Jer. 48. 41. Men are generally the ſame, There may be ſome little degrees of Difference, yet they are all but Fleſh ſtill. The Lord is the Maker of them all; He hath not made ſome to be Men and ſome to be Gods, ſome with Fear and ſome without; but this Plant is implanted into all, And ordered ſo, that it may be improved or abuſed, corrected or prevaricated, befitting this Life of Tryal. But the Wicked ſtrive againſt God, they would expel that out which he hath placed in, which they cannot, but do as far as lieth in them; for what they cannot utterly extinguiſh, they endeavour to hide and ſtifle. *Sanctifie the Lord of Hoſts himſelf and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread*, Iſa. 8. 13. and to this end all Fear was put into Men: But if they do not fear him, this is not their Courage, but Ignorance and Forgetfulneſs of whom they ſee not. And then for their making a ſhew not to value Death, No more do Sheep going to the Slaughter; for theſe Men juſt know they ſhall die, yet mind no more what ſhall become of them afterwards, then thoſe dumb Creatures paſſing on the Road do think of what we know ſhall befall them. Can thoſe Reaſonable Souls indeed *ruſh into the other World*, who cannot hear a true report thereof in an aiery ſound? Can they indeed ſtep forth *upon the dark Mountains*, who cannot ſee a Map thereof in Paper and Ink? They fooliſhly build up their Confidences, and in common Vogue would paſs for Men of Valour, becauſe they can ſlight and contemn Religion. But ſtand to it, for you are

Challenged into the Field, and ſee whether you do not betray Cowardice herein? What if it ſhould be ſaid, You that can hear Drums and Trumpets, the roaring of Canons; yet *the voice of God* you cannot endure to hear, *which is full of Majeſty and ſhaketh your Hearts.* When he Thundreth in the Air, it will make them quiet and ſtill; but when he ſpeaketh from Heaven, when he ſendeth his Waters through a Pipe, or gives life to a dead Letter, this you have not Courage enough to receive or read. You ſet at naught and deſpiſe his Ordinances when they are not rightly managed: You can ſmile at the flat and inſipid diſcourſes of Ignorant and Unfaithful Teachers, but not at thoſe who both underſtand and do as they ſhould. You that will not be out-Hectored, yet ye are frightened with *Words*, a ſure proof that they are not vain, but both true and ſignificative. You that do not value Sword nor Spears, yet dare not conteſt with *the Rod of his Mouth*, Iſa. 11. 4. What is lighter then that? but when God is pleaſed to uſe the meaneſt thing, it can make the ſtouteſt Oak of *Baſhan* tremble like the Leaves of the Forreſt. *Gather your ſelves O ye Mighty*, and try to ſhew your Courage, which if you can, you alſo will; for the great Importance and Neceſſity will preſs you forward if you have ſo much power to get over all this. Can you ſit for a while, and *tremble under Gods Word*? Will you admit of a ſecond hearing, and not be frightened with *Felix* to put it off to *a more convenient ſeaſon?* Are you able to ſtand before him *who Fights with the Sword of his Mouth?* who Wounds that he may Heal, who *Condemns that he may Juſtifie*, who as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Slays the Wicked*, caſting them down that they do not come again; but for thoſe who are not ſo fearful to run away, as Chriſt would have none to be ſo, he will not ſhew himſelf always thus terrible to them. Stand but the firſt Shock, and then you are Men. It is only in order to bring you unto Conviction, *to be Humbled under the mighty Hand of God*, and then this Dreadfulneſs will go off, that you may *ſerve him with Reverence and godly Fear.* 'Tis Puſillanimity and a more exceeding Fearfulneſs that keeps Men off, even in thoſe who would be thought to have the contrary; for could they attend to the Word of Exhortation, bear for a while a little Irkſomeneſs and Sorrow; Had they Reſolution to do ſome things contrary to corrupt nature, and undergo a little hardſhip in the Service of God, as others do for their Prince; If they would ſuffer

Pſal. 8. 2.

fer a ſhort dulneſs of Spirit as they go on through Fears and Cares for their earthly Sovereign; then the bleſſed Work would begin, continuing in Obedience and Godlineſs. And Courage would carry them through all the Stages of the Chriſtian Life. It is as well employed this way as to get Honour, a great Name, and advance his Fortune. It is as valuable a thing, *For the Righteous to be had in Everlaſting Remembrance*, as to be ſlain in the Field, knocked down under the Walls of a City, buried in the Rubbiſh, affording talk thereof for two or three days, and ſo be utterly forgotten. The *Inheritance incorruptible undefiled*, God hath promiſed; that *Honour which ſhall be to thoſe that Honour him*, do remain, when all their Riches and Renown are expired and gone. If it is not ſo, let them accuſe us *as Falſe Witneſſes*, who from Gods Word and Spirit have teſtified of theſe things. If they have fought the good Fight, and the Crown is not given them, let Me be found one of the Impoſers upon the World; let them ſuſpend their Cenſures and Frowns until then, and I cheerfully ſubmit to the *great Event of all things*.

Certain it is, the Courage according to the World comes to nothing, with all the Caſtles Built in the Air, the phantaſtick Projects, thoſe devices of Mans Invention, the *Rumors*, *Stirs and Commotion of Wars*, that Domineering, being Great and Terrible; all theſe are Bubbles of a little longer continuance, which break and diſſolve into nothing: *Fenced Cities turn into ruinous Heaps*, and theſe in proceſs of time are ſo changed, that they are not diſcernable from common Earth, but by a ſmall Hillock or Riſing we know not what it means. Thoſe goodly Armies that once looked big and bluſtering, ſo ſtately and of large extent; yet after the day of Slaughter they are thrown into a common Pit, and all their Carkaſes will not amount to ſo much as an ordinary pile of Faggots. Their Name and Memorial is periſhed with them. *As natural brute Beaſts made to be taken and deſtroyed*, 2 Pet. 2. 12. Or rather worſe, in that they go about ſowing Death till they fall themſelves, a paralel of which cannot be found in whatever lives upon the Earth beſides. Who can refrain to burſt forth into Tears for the Folly and Miſery of Mankind? that foregoing ſuch excellent and worthy Principles they ſhould take up with baſe and deſtructive ones. God hath ſhewed them a way how they ſhould exert their Valour and Activity for noble and aſſured ends, to *take his Kingdom by Violence*; All the mean Acts are as

reasonable and praise worthy as in Conquest of the Kingdoms of the Earth. When they are called up to the Heaven of Heavens, which are so exceeding Great and Eternal as may be seen by the outward Courts; yet they should scramble for a few Mole-Hills, which are quickly overthrown and turned into Dust, or themselves before. In the Christian Warfare there is no hating one another, all are Contenders, and there is room enough in the Celestial Mansions for ten Thousand times more then all the Inhabitants of the Earth; Yet here they continue to Kill and Slay, not out of Necessity as we do Beasts for Food, but to gratifie Pride, Ambition and Revenge, to dispossess them who have more right then themselves, to turn them out of the World, because they will not make way. This is reputed Gallantry and Honour. A strange way to Immortality, as those of old foolishly imagined to Butcher here; and by cutting off before the time, to make Mortality more Mortal. What fancies doth the *Abaddon* instill into Men? *Lactantius* observed of his times, and they now continue the same; *That to Kill or bring into Bondage free People, the more Men did Afflict, Spoil or Murder, they would account themselves more Noble and Eminent: and being taken with a shew of vain Glory, put the name of Vertue to the greatest Wickedness.*

Lact. de falſ. Relig.

This may be interpreted to *weaken the Hands of the Men of War*, Jer. 38. 4. But it is only what is agreeable to the Laws of God and Truth, which set up the Happiness of Mankind, as going back from them is Destruction and Misery. Reduce all Mens Transactions and Affairs to their Good, that whatever makes for it, may be followed; and what doth not, may be taken away, for that tends to the contrary. There is no indifferency in things; such as are said to do neither good nor harm; for they do one or the other, either Save or Destroy. We know who came on the first Errand: *The Prince of Peace, whom God hath raised up to be a Prince and a Saviour.* So he is to all those who obey and entertain him. But upon refusal of subjection to his Laws comes in the other of course, who hath his name, *Apollyon*. These two divide the World: The one hath honest meaning, and the excellency of Reason, which should still put it self forth. Satan to keep up his Kingdom hath all the Tricks, Devices, cunning Delusions to befool poor Mankind, representing such glorious Conquests, such Fame and Briskness; and secretly

ly ſets forth Religion as dull and regardleſs of any thing, fit for little and narrow Souls, it emaſculates the Spirit, making Men fearful and deſpicable. The doubt lies, whoſe Affections are carried towards the more Noble end. The one is for Heaven and Eternal things, the other for Earthly and Temporal; The one for what comforts in Hope and Expectation, being moſt ſatisfactory in the end; the other is concerning what breeds reſtleſneſs, regret and diſappointment. The one is for what hath all ſafety and real good to Men, the other hath nothing but uncertainty and evil.

If Chriſtianity were univerſally obſerved, there would be no Sword or Spear to be ſeen throughout the World. There is no harm in this. But now it is only by ſome, and not by others, thence do ariſe Wars and Fightings. Yet whatſoever Kings will go according the direction of the Goſpel, (as it is at their Peril if they do not) muſt engage in no War at all but Defenſive, or for Reparation of great Injuries, and that all fair means uſed firſt. *If it be poſſible as much as lieth in you, live Peaceably with all Men*, Rom. 12. 18. Some are ſuch Enemies, that when we ſpeak to them thereof, they make them ready for Battel; ſo they are to be brought over this way. Here our excellent Religion ſuffers thereof for the Wickedneſs and Baſeneſs of thoſe, *who have no Underſtanding, and muſt be held in with Bit and Bridle*, Pſal. 32. 8. And when they break out, are to be tamed with Whip and Scourge. Thoſe Primitive Chriſtians who did Fight under the Heathen Emperours, did altogether as Valiantly as others. We have heard of ſeveral Armies of the Religious that have acted more worthily by the Grace and Fear of God, without Drunkenneſs, Inconſideration and Unbelief, as who have went upon theſe Principles. The Objection is concerning Fear of the other World, but that is taken away; for any Man may by well-doing make the Promiſes of God applicable to himſelf, and he is in a warrantable Calling as *John Baptiſt* reſolved: Seeing we muſt all die one time or another, it is as good firſt or laſt, with the aſſurance of his favour unto whom all Fleſh ſhall come. This ſhould make them more Couragious; for they are upon certain grounds. But for thoſe careleſs ones I admire how they can be Couragious unleſs ſtupified and made Blind, the ways heretofore mentioned; for they being ſubject to evils from the World to Come, it is a

marvelous

marvelous Policy ſo to beguile that they fall in before they took any care to prevent, or were throughly put in mind of them. It muſt be Barbarous, and a ſiding with the Deceiver of Mankind, to contrive on ſet purpoſe to keep them ignorant, and as they think for the better accompiſhment of a preſent Deſign to ſuffer ſo many to go into Eternal Miſery. Whereas if care be had to inſtruct them aright in the Knowledge and Obedience of God, then they would have a well grounded Hope, and are under his Bleſſing and Protection, who is the Sovereign diſpoſer of all events of War. As Health is the greateſt good to the natural Body, ſo is Peace to the Publick. It is better to have a conſtant Health, but when interrupted by Sickneſs, then a proper Remedy is ſeaſonable to reſtore. So in this World of Sin and Confuſion, it is better to prevent the miſchievous effects at firſt; but when they come forth they muſt be ſuppreſſed again, which may be *cloſed up and mollified with Ointment* inſtead of the ſeverer Remedies. 'Tis thoſe corrupt Principles of Evil within us that breed all the Diſturbance throughout the World; (which are not to be ſeen in Beaſts, and we the more excellent Creatures might have been without them alſo, but God is to be Glorified in our Tryal and Obedience) Now what takes off from the Malignity of them, What doth Heal and Recover, This doth good to Mankind, which begins with the cauſes and removes them, ſuch are Ambition, Revenge, Covetouſneſs and Oppreſſion. As the direction of Gods holy Word doth all this.

2 Sam. 10. 12.

Iſa. 28. 6.

Thoſe are only againſt Religion and Reaſon, whoſe ways are condemned by it; The chief Captains and mighty Men will ſmile at this Diſcourſe, and ſay, *It was never well with the World ſince ſo much Arguing came in*; why Evil and Irregular Actions are for want of Prudence and due Knowledge; either not throughly giving way to it, or then not being guided thereby. If Sin and Paſſion did bear all the ſway, the compaſs of the whole Earth would be a larger *Bedlam*; And they that dwell therein muſt be Chained up in ſeveral Cells, or there would be no living amongſt Men. Even thoſe Nations which know not God have ſome dictates of the natural Law concerning Good and Evil, and alſo Reaſon, by which they frame Rules and Orders of Government; Otherwiſe it were not poſſible for any Kingdom or Community

Prov. 28. 2.

munity to ſtand. *Counſel is mine and ſound VViſdom, I am Underſtanding, I have Strength, By me Kings Reign and Princes decree Juſtice. By me Princes Rule, and Nobles, even all the Judges of the Earth*, Prov. 8. 14, 15, 16. The leſſer Degrees are neceſſary; much more is an higher improvement beneficial to Mankind. Which advances further then to carry on the Courſe of the World, or to ſecure Men in their reſpective Rights and Poſſeſſions: But it leads them up to the Knowledge and Favour of God, raiſes their Apprehenſions from little vain Temporal things, to thoſe which are Great, Eternal and Perfect, and at laſt inſtates them therewith. Which ſets before them things altogether worthy of Humane Nature, To climb up the Everlaſting Hills, To Fight with thoſe three Legions of Enemies, the World, the Fleſh and the Devil, To March through Difficulties and Oppoſitions, To be loaden with Spoils and get ground, all theſe are fit exerciſes for a Man. It is ſaid, Nothing is hard for him, but he dares break through all things. Then in this ſhew thy Honour and Renown, *Gird thy Sword upon thy Thigh, O moſt Mighty*; Be not afraid nor diſcouraged, thou haſt the Grace of God for aſſiſtance, and as long as thou putteſt forth thy ſtrength together with that, thou wilt go on Proſperouſly and Victoriouſly.

But how is all this Hardſhip reconcileable with preſent Happineſs? Very well, and he that knoweth it not, either doth not conſider, or not underſtand the nature of things: We were purpoſely made to overcome difficult things; We love to have ſome Oppoſition, and Rejoyce to get over it. It is more ſatisfaction to reſiſt then to yield unto a ſoft Temptation, for to that ſucceeds Repentance and Vexation; but for what looks uncouth and frightful, yet reſolutely to grapple therewith, and ſubdue it, there follows a Bleſſed Approbation and Complacency of Soul. In all Acts of Temptation, when it is complyed with, and throughly put forth, it is always found true, *Greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the World.* And this holds firm throughout the ſeveral ſteps of our Chriſtian Warfare, but when it is all accompliſhed at laſt, there is ſuch abundance of Comfort, that it may be better conceived then can be expreſſed. That pleaſant looking back upon paſt Labours, that ſweet Reflection on what he hath done and ſuffered in the Service of God, the Pain and Irkſomeneſs is over: the more hath been undergone, there ariſes a greater perfume, making way for a greater Reward. The memory

mory thereof is so delightful, that if he were to lye down in the Grave & be no more for ever; yet *it is enough to have lived according to the Will of God*, who will deal yet more Bountifully. Tell me, O ye Sons of Men, that have loved Vanity and sought after Leasing, that have Fought pitcht Battels to get Fame and Honour, when you come to stand upon the Confines of this World and the next, can you call to mind with Joy and Comfort for what you have done? But ye Christian Souls can bear witness to this thing, you that have set your selves against every Enemy, and hated every false way, do not Repent what you have done. You are more pleased with it, then if you had Conquered Kingdoms. You wish you had done better. You have cleaved unto the Lord with full purpose of Heart, not terrified with your Adversaries, Hypocrites and Unbelievers, who tryed to have beat you off, the Suggestions and Resistance of Satan and your own Flesh, yet by the help of God you have passed through these Tents of Enemies, and in all have come of more then Conquerour. What Triumph and Exaltation must this be just as the Soul is slipt out of this place of conflict, and Presented before *the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of* Israel, to receive his acceptance, and the Congratulation of those who a little before had done the same things. O Blessed day which opens into Immortality, where he will be always Praising and made Happy for ever? How should this stir up others to do the same? the whole being comprised in this, to believe and to do, The Apostle furnishes as to both in two words, *Add to your Faith Vertue*, 2 Pet. 1. 5.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of HUMILITY And PRIDE.

ALL uſeful Knowledge may be reduced to that of God and our ſelves; in what Relation we ſtand towards him, what he doth require of us, and what we are in our very Nature. God takes a contrary Method to be Glorified in the Sons of Men then according to the courſe of this World; for ſaith he who knew and revealed to us his Fathers Will, *Whoſoever ſhall Exalt himſelf ſhall be Abaſed, and he that Humbleth himſelf ſhall be Exalted*, Mat. 23. 12. accordingly are fitted thoſe Commandments, which were given to Mankind to prove whether we will obſerve them or not. Whether they will indeed *caſt down Imaginations and every High thing that Exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God?* Whether they will *receive the Kingdom of God as little Children*, Luke 18. 17. And be contented to remain ſo all their Life long; Not doing their own will, but the Will of their heavenly Father: Or on the other Hand to ſee if they will be their own Men, and follow their own Humour, diſdaining to be in ſubjection unto any. If they will aſpire after thoſe little Greatneſſes the World preſents them withal; To be lifted up above their Brethren, and exalt themſelves in their own eſteem as is poſſible for ſuch Creatures to be. One may ſtand amazed at the Monſtrouſneſs and Abſurdity of Pride, for a little mortal Being, who is like a Frog in a vile Body, to ſtile himſelf Lord of Lords, Commander of the Sun, Moon and Stars, as *Heathen* and

Mahometan Kings have done. *Even that Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is Worſhipped: for that he as God, ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God*, 2 Theſ. 2. 3, 4. There have been thoſe who have fulfilled this Scripture, and have foolishly arrogated to themſelves Blaſphemous Titles. And even
1 Sam. 2. 3. Chriſtians who would be like God in Greatneſs but not in *Knowledge*, have taken upon them the communicable attributes, as *Moſt Gracious*, *Moſt Excellent*, *Moſt Mighty*, which is expreſſed in ſo exalted a manner, that there cannot be given greater in the like Words to God himſelf. However, this be the Cuſtom of the World, yet themſelves being Subjects of the *Great King of all the Earth* ſhould not uſe the very ſame Title with him, as they will not ſuffer their under Officers and Lieutenants to bear the ſame with themſelves. Men of Underſtanding may thus judge what is likely moſt to avail them, when God who is jealous of his own Glory, will recompence every one according to his deeds.

How ſtrange are the exceſſes and runnings out of Pride! The nature of Man doth not lie ſluggiſh, for if it doth not grow up the right way in Knowledge and Obedience, it will ſhoot and ſpread forth in Vain and Phantaſtical Principles. If he doth not *walk Humbly with his God*, Mic. 6. 8. he will do Proudly againſt him by Stubbornneſs, Contempt or Negligence. Whatever we are in the common nature of Man, or however placed in thoſe different Ranks in the World, yet Humility requires to do any thing at his Command, to obſerve every title of our Duty nevertheleſs, and alſo a right Carriage to our Brethren of poor and low eſtate. We are required to do things not properly beneath or diſgraceful to our nature, for nothing is ſo in the moſt ſubmiſſive Acts of Religion, but what looks little and contemptible in the Eye of others; On the contrary, to deſpiſe thoſe *things which are highly eſteemed amongſt Men*; Not to affect or run greedily after them, for this would be to give an implied preference to them before the things of God.

Pride is an appearing above what one is in himſelf, and diſcovers it ſelf in Diſobedience to God, and lifting up above the Brethren. It is ſet down in Scripture by *lifting up and exalting*, 2 Chron. 26. 16. Jer. 48. 29. Jer. 49. 16. 1 Sam. 2. 3. Iſa. 2. 11, 12. Iſa. 13. 11. Iſa. 14. 14. Ezek. 28. 2. Dan.

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11. 36, 37. 1 Cor. 4. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 12. 7. Rom. 12. 3. *A thinking himſelf above what he ought*, a being puffed up with what he hath not, or ſetting too great a value on what he hath, or concluding them to be his own which he hath received. Whatever is contrary to that juſt true Knowledge and Eſteem of himſelf, is Pride. And this is not to be meaſured according to the opinion of others, but the reality of things. Humility and Pride branch forth into two ſeveral Principles of Action; Which is the more worthy and likely to tend unto Happineſs will be proper for preſent enquiry; and let us not judge by the multitude of one ſide or fewneſs of the other, but from the Truth and Reaſon of things.

Humility at firſt ſeems Sneaking and Contemptible; Which was not ſo much known before Religion came into the World. But this hath been ſaid to unman us, making us to ſtoop and preſs down to the Earth. Some think thoſe Proſtrations and humble Geſtures in Divine Service unbecoming the erected Stature of Man; Neither is it for him to be curbed and reſtrained in his way. To fore-go thoſe great things of the World, and have a mean opinion of himſelf, as if he did not underſtand or know; all theſe are not ſutable with the lofty nature of Man.

Such are the firſt and ſudden Apprehenſions, but not a full and ſerious Thought. It cannot be the leaſt undervaluing for *Man whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils*, within a little compaſs, to be ſubject unto him, *whoſe Spirit filleth the World*. It is meet and right that the *Knees ſhall bow and bend* to him, who made them thus *Flexible*. It is the greateſt Honour that can poſſibly be to Mankind, that ſo Glorious a God doth vouchſafe any relation to us: He is moſt worthy of our Obedience and Service. Doth any one refuſe or ſet at naught to be the adopted Son of a King, who yet is not ſo much to the Almighty, as a Toad to the goodlieſt Perſonage on Earth? It is ſeemly for a Worm to lie proſtrate before the Lord and Governour of the World, to whom Angels and Arch-Angels cover themſelves, and fall on their Faces. It is reaſonable to give up our will to his Will; It was thy own will and power at firſt God having left it ſo, and he is *willingly* obedient unto his Maker. What he hath choſen is a Law of Liberty & Excellency; the particular Acts are as worthy, and rather to be followed then thoſe of a Mans own Invention and Fancy. He is a Servant to God but none elſe, neither the Devil, nor Luſt, nor other Men; And therefore is more Honourable then thoſe who have them for Pſal. 95. 6.

their Masters, as all have one or the other. For his stupidity and narrowness of mind in not caring for the things of this World, will the Men hereof joyn Issue upon this Point, and try whose Soul is most enlarged and hath the more noble desires? The one seeks for the *great things of God and Eternity*, the Glories of his Kingdom, that most perfect exceeding and enduring Happiness, yea, every thing so vast and Wonderful, that the Temptation to Unbelief returns, They are too great to be true. But it is easily beaten back again; for we may well judge of the Greatness of the things which are not seen, by the Greatness of them which are seen. How we shall come at them we may thus know, The same power who sent us hither, will convey us up; and also the pure and holy Soul freed from Sin and Earthliness, hath such Aspirings and Flyings up, that she would even now break out unless kept in by these Chains of Flesh; but when the *Angel shall come and they fall off*, then she immediately ascends towards those High and Blessed Mansions. Is this pressing down to the Earth, or exalting up to Heaven? Who now willingly fall down, that they may rise up again. *Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up*, Jam. 4.10. They choose to be despised in honouring of him, that he may Honour them Humility is a great help in the several acts of Obedience, and enables to resist Temptations. It renounces little and present things in order to the future, which are so exceeding that it is not possible to utter. Who go in the way to obtain that Eternal and not far distant Happiness, they have some likewise in the mean while; said our Forerunner, the great Example of Humility, *Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am Meek and Lowly of Heart, and ye shall find Rest to your Souls*, Mat. 11. 29. That gives Peace and Quietness, Contentment and Satisfaction, Moderates our desires as to Temporal things. The humble Person acknowledges to have received every thing he hath, and is far from Glorying as if he had not received it, so likewise from Murmuring if not given; for he can withhold his Hand, and who may find fault? There is not so very much (God having been pleased thus to order it for wise and good ends) in those Blessings of his left Hand; sufficient indeed to excite our Thankfulness, but not to place our Happiness in; so neither to Fret or make our selves Miserable for want of them. A lowly frame of mind brings Good and Comfort in every state

Acts 12.7.

or

or condition, and hinders from all that Vexation which is occasioned through Pride. *The Patient in Spirit is better then the Proud in Spirit*, Eccles. 7. 8.

Of Pride

When a Man doth not seek for that Happiness which cometh from God only, he will endeavour to build up one to himself, to Advance and become as Great as he can, by all manner of means, without Respect had to the Divine Commandments. And this either in the improvement of what he hath already, or looking out and labouring after more. There is a Consciousness of his imperfection by Nature, how small and of no Reputation, How Mean and Poor a Being he is, and a secret Vexation thereat; whereupon he is resolved to redress this as much as lieth in his power. And indeed if he would go in Gods Way, he were to be commended herein; for he made us so low in order to Exaltation, that by complying with his Grace we should be brought unto Glory, by following of him we should ascend higher; but alas! we forsake him and will *go in our own way, according to our own thoughts.* The reason of our mistake is, because there is no present and visible Increase in the one, whilst there doth seem to be in the other. But as our Lord said of those who did their Religious Duties for the Glory of Men, *Verily they have their Reward*, Mat. 6. 2. So it holds true of all Sin, Lust, Stubbornness and Humour, and more especially of all manner of Pride: It hath the present Conveniency and proposed Good only, but no more, As here getting Honour and preventing Contempt, or such like. Now if these do not amount to so much as the probable Good of the other way, a wise Man knoweth what he hath to do and choose. We are assured what is the utmost of Pride or worldly Greatness in Men or things; and see whether they are worthy to be compared with *Angels, Saints* or those *Glorious things that are spoken of thee, thou City of God*; this will manifest who sets before him the more Honourable end.

Psal. 73. 6.

I have often admired what the Psalmist saith, *The Wicked through the Pride of his Countenance will not seek after God*, Psal. 10. 4. When it is verified by Experience at this day: Religion is a little contemptible thing, it is for the lower sort of People to mind that, but some fancy themselves above it; Whereas if they had but so much

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Wit and Reaſon as to make an Inference, they might conclude, As ſure as the Object thereof is Real, (which is as certain as that there is a World and any thing in it) and themſelves cannot deny, but are ſuch Fools as not to underſtand, or not conſider: So every thing is vaſt and aſtoniſhing which relates to that God, *with whom we have to do.* His dimenſions may be ſeen by his Works. *Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Foot-ſtool; he meaſures it with a Span, who holds the Waters in the hollow of his Hand, filleth all places and all things, from Everlaſting to Everlaſting.* He doth ſo exceed Mans Apprehenſion, that to ſpeak of him doth leſſen his Majeſty and Greatneſs.

But come to debate the Caſe ye Sons of Pride: Are not your ways little? your great Company are but Men and Women, who *alſo are formed out of the Clay*, Job 33.6. Are not thoſe Honourable Titles a meer *Voice*, which have their being only upon the Breath of the Speaker, and are nothing beſides? What are fine Clothes, Gayety and Retinue? Not ſo much when compared with the Dazling of *Seraphims*, as the paint of a Butterflie to the Sun. What are a few little Creatures going together, when conſidered with the *innumerable company of Angels*, one whereof is greater in Power and Might then an Hundred Fourſcore Thouſand of us? Behold all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them; they are not diſperſed throughout the Earth, but compriſed in a leſſer Part, one City in a Nation, and within a few Houſes. But what is that taken in with the whole together? *Lift up your Eyes on high, and behold who hath Created theſe things*, Iſa. 40. 26. And then determine which is greateſt. Open the Doors of your Underſtanding that the whole may come in; and then conceive who is more Honourable, The Servant of him whoſe is the World and the Fulneſs thereof, or a Lord of ſo many Acres of Land. Thoſe Palaces and great Houſes are not ſo much as the Dwelling of Ants to that *Habitation of his Holineſs, the Houſe Eternal in the Heavens* prepared for all thoſe who diligently ſeek to come there. I ask no Mans Faith for this, but appeal to his very Sence if he looks upward, or how far the *Eaſt* is from the *Weſt*. *The Eyes of our Underſtanding being enlightened, do as clearly perceive the inviſible things within, as the outward Eye doth what is before us.* So that let none talk of uncertainty and fiction, neither put off the minding them. The Proud and Scornful

ful Men are in truth low-Spirited: A Glaſs of Liquor or the ſparklings of Wine, the gratifying of a lower Inclination, a Whore and well coloured Duſt, a few little parcels of Land is what they concern themſelves about: Not regarding the Rivers in the Paradiſe of God, the Glory and Exſtacy of that Place, the Inheritance reſerved there. You are for a blaſt of Wind, which doth no good but puffs up a bubble for the lightneſs thereof. You are for a ſmall Reputation and Applauſe from talking *Worms*, and *ſeek not the Honour that cometh from God only*, John 5. 44. That gaudy ſhew goes away; *As a Dream when one awaketh*: Iſa. 23. 9 *So O Lord when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their Image*, Pſal. 73. 20. As they are miſtaken in their conceit of Greatneſs, ſo likewiſe of Happineſs, being there for little and Vain things, for trifling and fading delights before *Great and enduring Peace*. They are for thoſe things which depart and come to nothing with the day, before that ſatisfaction which is juſt begun here, but finiſhed and perfected through infinite Ages. Is this your Honour? It is ſuch as *hath no Underſtanding*. Is this your Pride? it is both a Deceit and a Lye: for ſmall things it bereaves you of greater, it makes a ſhew of what is not, pretends to Great and Honourable, but it is Pitiful, Low and Contemptible. Are theſe fit to be made an occaſion to forget God, or deſpiſe what belongs unto him? *Their Heart was Exalted, therefore have they forgotten me*, Hoſ. 13. 6. 'Tis by reaſon of thoſe paltry things, that ſome come to that paſs as to do according to their will, notwithſtanding Gods Commandment to the contrary; if not to ſpeak out, yet to think *Marvellous things againſt the God of Gods*, Dan. 11. 36.

This doth ſhew forth the great and enlarged faculties in Man that can ſtretch thus far; but again this betrays his Degeneracy and Folly, that he ſhould do it upon ſuch a ſmall and light occaſion. For one that might be *partaker of the Divine Nature*, to Jer. 2. 11. vaunt himſelf in beaſtly inclinations and deſires, this really brings down to the Earth. *And didſt debaſe thy ſelf even unto Hell*, Iſa. 57. 9. For him that is called unto Precious and Ineſtimable things, to Pride himſelf in thoſe of no value, to be lifted up with meer Vanities when they are capable to inherit great Excellencies; which they ſet at naught, becauſe they underſtand them not. It will be the Exclamation at laſt, What hath Pride profited us, or what good hath Riches brought us? But this voice ſignifies nothing

thing to Men in Deſperation and Miſery. Whereas if now they would *lay it to Heart*, it might bring them out of this Temptation and Snare of the Devil. Every one would willingly be Happy, and uſe the means to be ſo; Now there are but two ways in the general, Either by following Gods Grace and Direction, or their own Fancies and Thoughts; which they have from a ſlight apprehenſion of the thing, or the opinion and multitude of others. That the generality of Mankind are not yet in the right, is as ſure as Gods Word is true. Even in this doubt wherein the World ſtands divided, One that hath common Wiſdom and diſcerning in every Action he takes in Hand, or in every thing he propoſes to himſelf, might reduce it all this. Whether the good or evil of a thing will be greater, conſidering both what is preſent and what is to come, for this will as certainly be here as the other: And this ſhould determine every ones choice in the way to Happineſs, which indeed muſt, if he would make ſure and not be deceived therein. *We call the Proud Happy*, Mal. 3. 15. Mark the Phraſe, for it is only ſo with word of Mouth, but we cannot conclude it ſo upon Conſideration and Diſcourſe; for that will make to appear, it brings more Evil then Good unto Men.

It is the cauſe of Diſobedience unto God, for it fooliſhly diſdaines to be in ſubjection unto him, and prefers its own will before the Will of God. This is a very great temptation, for tis not ſo much the Pleaſures of a Wicked Life, but a Proud thinking to have the alone Command over himſelf and his own Actions, to be governed by none, and who ſhall controul him? This makes to ſlight and ſeem to laugh at the Word of God; They reckon it a piece of Bravery that they can do contrary, They deſpiſe the means of Grace and Salvation, They piſh at Inſtruction, and thoſe who are appointed to make it known. Shall a few Men take upon them to be Wiſer then the reſt, or to Reform others, or ſhall they do according as they are bid? But all this is eaſily anſwered, for God ſpeaks unto the World by thoſe of the ſame likeneſs with our ſelves; it is nothing to us let Men do as they will, no more then it is to the Poſte whether the Proclamation be complyed withal or not. *His Laws are ſet before us by his Servants the Prophets*, Dan. 9. 10. We obſerve them not as the words of *Moſes, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Apoſtles*, but as the very Commands of God and his Chriſt. There is an *Obedience due to the Truth*

Rom. 2.8.

Truth as being from him, but not at all becauſe ſuch a fellow-Creature ſaith, or would have it ſo. *Tribulation and Anguiſh* is denounced againſt thoſe who will not obey it now, and they will really with tney had. And thoſe who purpoſely go againſt thoſe Pillars of Truth, will find that they had better run their Head againſt a ſtone-Wall, which may daſh out their own Brains, but that remains unſhaken. But the Proud Men will not hear nor read, or if they do, they will not obey; for ſay they in the deep of the Heart, they have power over themſelves, which is the beginning of their Diſobedience and Tranſgreſſion, they are liable to the Miſery and Threatning annexed, which will certainly come upon them if they continue in that wicked mind. The Stubbornneſs and Contempt is much worſe to the great God over all, then if a Son or a Servant is perverſly reſolved not to † hear and know what his Father or Maſter would ſay, or not give heed to it. All Men are not thus abominably Wicked; but this accurſed thing of Pride hinders others from obeying the whole Will of God, and ſo keeps them off from peace of Mind, and deprives of that future recompence which is to thoſe who *love the Lord with all their Heart and all their Soul*, for there is a reſerve of ſome Sin, or omiſſion of ſome Duty, becauſe they would not loſe their Reputation amongſt Men. Said our Lord to the Phariſees, *Ye are they which juſtifie your ſelves before Men, but God knoweth your Hearts, for that which is highly eſteemed amongſt Men, is an abomination in the ſight of God*, Luke 16. 15. To do no more or otherwiſe in Religion then is faſhionable or commonly practiſed, God knows the principle thereof being to recommend themſelves more to the World, then to him only. Example (except that of Chriſt) is no Rule of Action: We are to recede from the Majority of Men, even of the ſame Chriſtian Profeſſion, if Conſcience and manifeſt Duty require it, for to be led away with the *Error and Corruption* of the Generality, and to have that for an excuſe, againſt which *Exod.* 23. 2. 2 *Pet.* 3. 16, 17. are ſo expreſs, He that truly fears God, will not admit thereof. Which yet is hard in that it renders one obnoxious to reproach and evil ſpeaking, which one cannot ſo well bear unleſs the high and corrupt Inclinations are ſubdued. Pride doth at firſt ſtop from coming into the way of godlineſs, and afterwards from walking and continuing therein. Humility brings in, fixes his ſteps cloſe and ſtedfaſt that he doth not turn aſide. If one could

† Jer. 13. 15.

1 Cor. 11. 1.

be contented to be *a Fool for Christ*, to be *rejected and despised of Men*, (as the humble Soul may) How great and worthy things might he do for his Kingdom? All the advantages off Pride will not countervail the Misery, Loss and Danger thereof. This Serpent doth strangely transform it self, for first it beats of from Obedience at all, and then from Universal; but when that is endeavoured to be performed, yet still this creeps in, being a device of the Enemy of Mankind, to turn them from Gods favour and acceptance. *They also do no Iniquity, they walk in his Ways*, Psal. 119. 3. Then comes into their mind a conceit of their own Performances, aspiring Thoughts; which if consented unto and cherished, they have their Reward at present, but no more. But if endeavoured against, then is Vexation, Fear and Caution, which do cause more trouble then the complacency of the rising Humour. *Hab.* 2. 4.

The connexion of the Happiness of the Life that now is, and that which is to come may be seen, for what is an Impediment to Heavenly and future things, is also to those of this place and time; for here Pride is the chief if not only thing which hinders our Peace and Contentment. This is the Sting of every Affliction, making the sence thereof more continual and grievous. The Thoughts are restless and turbulent, which should be quiet and composed, the high Imaginations are stopt in the flight, or the Foundation is taken away, so they must either fall or be kept up with difficulty. Here is labour and struggle without profit, here is disquiet and hardship to keep up the tormenting inclination without any Advantage: Many times they wilfully deprive themselves of what would do Good, be an ease or remedy from such an Evil upon a slight opinion, It is an undervaluing and they scorn it; when it is none at all, or if it were, yet in Prudence should be submitted unto for the greater benefit. If this word Undervaluing were a little examined, how would it appear? for if taken in a right sence to admit of nothing beneath the dignity of Humane nature, to do nothing below a Man, let every one keep up this Principle to the utmost, and act accordingly. But here it is found that those who seem most to abhor it, yet willingly incur the just Imputation by unnatural and worse then beastly Lust, by Lying and Falshood, by Oppression and Dishonesty. As they Debase themselves, so another way they Exalt themselves above measure: for being only in an higher Form, They forget

get they are *Men*, or imagine thoſe in a lower condition to be quite different from them, and therefore diſdain to do the ſame things. As among the Angels and heavenly Bodies there is a different Size and Glory, ſo God hath eſtabliſhed a diſtinction among Men, King and Subjects. Parent and Children, Maſter and Servants, High and Low, Rich and Poor. And nothing is to be done to break this order, yet ſtill all are Men of the ſame likeneſs and common priviledges. Whatſoever is more then to keep up this order and diverſity, is Pride. And what is no Reproach for a Man to do, neither is it an Undervaluing although he is in a Noble and Exalted Condition. As we are advancing and going towards Happineſs, every thing is to be laid aſide that hinders from it. And then Pride would be diſmiſſed with all its Followers. It would be endleſs to repreſent to view how cunningly and variouſly it works in the minds of Men, interweaves it ſelf throughout their whole Nature, hath to do with all their Actions. And what is the reſult of the whole? Is there Good miſſed of, or Evil fallen into? Pride is ſome cauſe thereof, but moſt commonly the principal. Survey the Miſeries and Griefs that people groan under, they will be likewiſe found owing to this corrupt Inclination.

God expreſſes his Diſpleaſure in ſeveral places of Holy Writ againſt Pride: It is not put amongſt the excluding *Works of the Fleſh*, Gal. 5. or the *deadly Sins*, Rev. 21. 8. But it is Comprehenſive of the whole Maſs and Leaven of Sin, and leads on to that which hinders from Heaven and brings down unto Hell; *For if God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to Hell*, 2 Pet. 2. 4. how ſhall he ſpare them who are guilty of the like Tranſgreſſion? He that doth *Reſiſt*, *Hate* and *know the Proud afar off*, will not ſuffer them to partake of thoſe good things he hath prepared for them that love him. It is ſtrange that men who believe the Scriptures ſhould give way to it, for they ſpeak how it leads to *Deſtruction and bringing Low*, Job 20.6.7. Job 40.11. Iſa. 2. 11, 12. Ezek. 17. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6. God would have none to be High and Exalted before his time. It doth not become a Potſherd of the Earth, a ſmall, weak and finite Being. Whatever Honour and Advancement he ſhall meet withal, he is to expect from his Maſter only. But if he will now try himſelf in his own way, he will fall into Shame and Diſappointment. Let him be never ſo Proud in Heart, continually raiſing up Imagina-

tions. Let him puff and ſwell never ſo much, there is an end of all. *His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth: in that very day his Thoughts Periſh*, Pſal. 146. 4. It ſinks into a clod of Clay, All thoſe great fancies as to his Eſteem and Advantages in the World, do utterly vaniſh and come to nothing as ſoon as his Spirit is gone out, and flies into that place where no regard is had to what is highly valued here. The utmoſt of Pride is contained in this Life, and the things had therein, which we ſee with our Eyes do certainly periſh and ſtand the owners in no ſtead; We are further told by God (who ſent us here for tryal, who knows all things and how it ſhall be hereafter) that this way leads to Contempt and Falling; when what is ſpoken of as paſt according to the Prophetick ſtile, which is as true as if already fulfilled; *He hath put down the Mighty from their Seats, and exalted them of low Degree*, Luke 1. 52. Thoſe who are Great in this World, ſhall be little in the World to come; and the little great; which will be ſo as to Wicked and Ungodly perſons, and thoſe of mean Condition who continue in all Obedience. Even thoſe of high Degree who live in good Conſcience and Duty, yet the more Acts of Humility and Condeſcention they uſe, it will be much better for them. Wherefore Humble your ſelves O ye Mighty, for this is the way to preſerve what you have, and attain greater Advancement. A mean perſon cannot bow down, he cannot ſtoop beneath what he is already, his way of Exaltation is by continuing where he is, having Thoughts only ſuitable, and not above his Condition. You are by God placed higher that you may voluntarily come down, ſtill keep the difference you have in the World, do as the reſt of your Brethren, and hereafter be put into a Seat among the Bleſſed, when all ſhall be Perfect; Diſdain and Envy ſhall ceaſe.

It is manifeſt worldly Pride cannot do any good, nor that which creeps in to Religion alſo. I mean of thoſe who would ſave their Souls in a gentile way, who are for the modiſh manner of Worſhip and Devotion, performing it in a ſtiff careleſs and indifferent way; who put a difference in Congregations, frequenting thoſe where people of Quality do reſort, and for having Paſtors accordingly; who *love the uppermoſt Seats in the Synagogue*. You would be Great and Honoured ſtill, then conſider ſeriouſly whether indeed this is the way to be ſo? Did our Fathers pleaſe God after this manner? Is there any intimation

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in his Word that it is acceptable in his ſight? Is it not *an Abomination* as the effect *of Pride*, Prov. 16. 5. *Who ſay to the Poor, ſtand by your ſelves, come not near us, for we are more Rich and Honourable then you*, If ſuch Thoughts are in the breaſt of any, God knoweth them, and putteth theſe things in his Book of Remembrance, and they ſhall be brought forth one day, when he ſhall make a right difference among his People. You had better take this Counſel, which you will not diſapprove of in a day of Humiliation, Sickneſs, Death Bed, or as ſoon as ever you are ſtept forth into the other World, but only to be obſerved in your life time: As our Lord dwelt among us in the Habit of a poor ordinary Perſon, yet *had his Grave with the Rich*; ſo you, who have your Habitation and Living with them, may follow him in the Generation, and ſerve him in the ſame manner as poor people do. To whom he ſaith *the Goſpel is Preached*. Come over to the Plainneſs and Simplicity thereof; follow the Fashion only in lawful things, but let it have nothing to do with Religion, for God doth not ſo well like the *Courſe of this World*, that being either oppoſite unto, or would corrupt the things pertaining to him. If you take heed to all this, you will be no loſer in the end, but greater then thoſe who are reſolved to hold faſt in their wonted way, whatever may be ſaid to the contrary. It is Vain to offer any thing to perſons that are under the Dominion of pride, for this makes them deſpite Exhortation and Inſtruction, to ſet themſelves above, to caſt off and not mind it. This is one cunning Stratagem of the Devil, for thus he prevails with them *not to receive the Truth that they might be ſaved*. He repreſents ſuch as mean perſons and *buſie Bodies in other Mens matters*, whom God hath raiſed up as Inſtruments to convey it unto them; Their deſpiſing is againſt him, for we do not ſpeak out of our own Humour, Fancy or any prejudice, but from his Word only. We know and are aſſured that it is true, and every tittle ſhall be fulfilled. And then it muſt be reaſonable to put all in mind to take heed and order their Actions accordingly. When it is ſuggeſted in a common matter, ſuch a thing cannot poſſibly profit, but is likely to do more harm then good, there is no Frown or ſecret Indignation, but Thanks for the Admonition. Why ſhould it not be ſo likewiſe in Spiritual things? Becauſe there is a ſubtle Adverſary who would have ſuch things done and conſented unto,

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and ſtirs up a cloſe Antipathy and Hatred againſt them who would diſſwade from Falſe and Deceitful appearances.

You would fain be Great. Who hinders? but let it be only in that way God hath ſhewed. Be contented for a little while, and wait what he will do for you. We beſeech you to forego thoſe things which are only ſhadows of Greatneſs, which evidently decline, and vaniſh and hinder from obtaining the ſubſtance thereof, which you are moſt earneſtly deſired to make ſure of above all things. He that is leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, is greater then he who hath the Pomp and Glory of this World; the one doth as much exceed the other in Degree and Continuance, as the Sun doth the light of a Spark, which aſcends up a little height, expires and is nothing; ſo whatever is Sperious and Beautiful here, if for ſome Years, it is not ſo much in compariſon to the Glories of Heaven and Eternity. What a fool muſt he be, who doth loſe the greater for the leſs? Is he not miſtaken and deceived, who whilſt he ſeeks to be Exalted becomes low? who is deſirous to be Great, but is found little? Shall we call up the careleſs Nobility and Gentry of former days, who lived and died in their Imaginations? let theſe *Gods aſcend out of the Earth*, even all thoſe of ſeveral Generations and Countries heretofore. *Hell hath enlarged her ſelf, and opened her Mouth without meaſure, and their Glory, and their Multitude, and their Pomp, and he that Rejoyceth ſhall deſcend into it*, Iſa. 5. 14. Their Souls even now are ſenſible what their Earthly Grandure amounts unto, juſt nothing at all; but when the day of God's Judgment and their own Reſurrection is come, they ſhall further know what it is they loſe and are to ſuffer for the ſame. This ſtands for a warning to all thoſe who are now Living and ſhall be Born, *not to fill up the Meaſure of their Fathers*, but ſo to uſe their Greatneſs as not to abuſe it, for it paſſeth away, and ſuch is the event thereof if not rightly managed. What an horrible Abuſe and Prevarication it is, That when they ſhould be more Thankful and Obedient to him who placed them in a higher Station, thence to lift up themſelves as to contemn God and Sin againſt him? What is lent for a tryal of Humility and moderate Deportment, they preſently turn into Pride and inſolent Carriage to others.

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The nature of Man is extream prone to Pride and hardly reſtrained, no other way but according to what is written. *Then he openeth the Ears of Men, and ſealeth their Inſtruction, That he may with-draw Man from his purpoſe, and hide Pride from Man*, Job 33. 16, 17. Let them attend to what may be ſaid of the nature of things and their Eſtabliſhment, of his own frame and conſtitution, his own Vileneſs, Weakneſs and Mortality, how he is Duſt and Aſhes, walking up and down like a Shadow, a little dependant Being, and much more there is to humble and keep him off from this Sin. The prevalency thereof ariſes from thoſe enlarged Faculties wherewith Man is endued, as alſo that Preparation and Tendency God hath put into him for greater things. Now this is turned the wrong way, and thence proceeds all the Tranſgreſſion and Irregularity. Thoſe powers of Soul were deſigned to *ſerve the Lord with all the Heart*, but *turning aſide, they are taken up with vain things which cannot profit*, 1 Sam. 12 20, 21. If Man were to be once made, and ſo ſtill to abide; If there was no further Advancement and Exaltation for him; If he were not capable of Increaſe, and to be yet more Excellent; What mean thoſe aſpirings after it, that he is ſtill reaching yet higher? This being equally in good and bad, which alſo prompts to things lawful and commendable as following ones Humour and vain Applauſe, to keeping of the Commandments all one as breaking them; which ſeems to ſhew this is not ſo much the voice of Depraved, as Imperfect Nature. Even before Sin came into the World, theſe deſires were; ſo much was not revealed for wiſe Reaſons, yet our Fore-father was to have been Tranſlated as *Enoch* if he had pleaſed God, and to have a better Body then formed out of the Earth, that to be changed into more Glorious. His Soul was to have been more enlarged, and converſe with higher things then thoſe of this Earth. God would have led him up from one Degree to another; But the fault was his Impatiency, and he would not tarry the Lords leiſure. He did hearken and yield unto the firſt propoſal and appearance of being greater, when himſelf might have had an aſſurance of being ſo, if he had been contented to have waited for ſome time. Nothing is more reaſonable then for a Creature to expect of his Creator, That as he was firſt pleaſed to make him low until he ſhould be raiſed and rendred more Excellent, ſo according to his good Pleaſure he would *fill the Mouth* which he hath made capable and commanded

See and Observe, *Psal.* 145 16. 19

commanded to be *opened wide*, Psal. 81. 10. That he would satisfie the desires he hath put in. *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me*, Psal. 138. 8. And we are to wait his good time. We see how our Fore-father fell, how others at this day Transgress after the same manner, so we may look on and be afraid, using the utmost caution that we do not follow after them.

Man would be Happy and Great his own way, and that presently; God hath ordered another, which is to be begun here and fully manifested hereafter. The question is whose Will shall take place; If Man follows his own, he shall find nothing sutable to his Faculties, but be carried along with Fallhood and Deceit, till he falls into Destruction and Misery. But in Gods way, and according to his appointment, there let him stretch out as far as he can, and he will meet with things proportionable with Reality and Truth according to his Promise and Covenant of our Sojourning here, which ends in the greatest Safety and most compleat Happiness. *Humble your selves therefore under the Mighty Hand of God, that he may Exalt you in due time*, 1 Pet. 5. 6.

Those accomplishments of the inward Man are most worthy to be sought after and highly to be valued, for they have real Worth and Excellency, they give Peace and Blessed Expectation to the Soul, and when the Body goes to the Earth, remain together till they are perfected in eternal Happiness Indeed he that is discerning cannot have a thing but he knoweth he hath it, and also the worth thereof. As he sees others value themselves upon the account of such and such things, comparing his with theirs, he is subject to do the like. Thence cometh spiritual Pride to be the greatest of all Pride, as those Graces and Gifts are more excellent then any thing whatsoever. But that *all Glory may be unto God*, for stirring up Thankfulness unto him, and quelling Self-conceit, and also to take somewhat off from the Temptation to Hypocrisie; it may be requisite to lay open this Propolition with the Reasons thereof, *viz.* If a Man be Religious, he deserves not the least Praise nor Reputation from others; for it is matter of Duty as he is a Servant; If he is only according to the common Standard of the World, that is from a mercenary selfish principle out of respect to the promise of Eternal Life, and fear of the threatnings of Eternal Death, and that prudential security to saving of the Soul as to the uncertainty thereof. Now there is

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no more Commendation in all this then an Hireling that works for his Pay, or anothers doing to prevent an Evil that would befall him, or to ſecure ones ſelf in a matter doubtful. But for what is more and comes to the practice of things which are *Honeſt, Lovely, of good Report, Vertue, Praiſe*, Phil. 4. 8. For the ſeveral Acts of Univerſal Obedience, pure Faith and Love, Free-will Offerings, doing Good, working with Grace; all this is Anſwered from *Rom.* 2. 29. *Whoſe Praiſe is not of Men, but of God* 'Tis not Man that doth this, but the Grace of God in him, by ſtrong impulſes or quickenings, which he muſt give way unto, or he is uneaſy. And to keep his own Peace, being acted he doth act. *For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. God makes him both to will and to do of his own good Pleaſure, he is a meer Creature, an Inſtrument only, and alſo God hath made him thus. So he alone is to be glorified in the Gifts, he giveth unto Men. They are to ſtir up and comply therewith, for which they receive a Reward. *Glory to God in the higheſt, and on Earth Peace, good Will towards Men*, Luke 2. 13. Thoſe whom he ſends forth ſhould not be diſturbed, they deſire only the common thing of *good Will* and *kind Reception*, but no thanks at all, for their Maſter will ſufficiently reward them. No Fleſh muſt Glory in his Preſence, or take the leaſt ſhare of that Honour which is due unto God only. And what ſome of forward but not throughly conſidering minds may give, they are to return immediately into the Exchequer of *Praiſes of the Great King*. We have Examples of this in Chriſt and his Apoſtles. See how he is deſcribed, *Zech.* 9. 9. And who are commiſſioned under him, though their * Employment is more worthy then that of Kings and the wiſeſt States-Men, yet they are to poſſeſs and diſcharge it with lowlineſs of mind.

Acts 18. 5.

Acts 12. 23.

Pſal. 111. 3.

Iſa. 42. 21.

Let nothing be done out of moroſeneſs or frowardneſs to derogate from that Civility and Reſpect due unto Men. Yet in this we do exceed (as every thing proves a Temptation) by Flattery and Pride; but alſo as we are fellow Creatures we do too much Idolize one another in giving that Honour, that we cannot give greater of the ſame ſort, even to our Lord and Maſter. *Submitting your ſelves one to another in the fear of God*, Epheſ. 5. 21. *Love as Brethren, be pitiful, be Courteous*, 1 Pet. 3. 8. Which may as well be preſerved without that ſtrain of Complement, or

Job 32. 21, 22.

thoſe Expreſſions which are not proper for ſuch low and frail Creatures as we are. This may be put off as a needleſs Scruple and Fear; but if it were complyed withal, it would bring greater good at the laſt, then all the conveniencies of Diſſimulation, Flattery or Ignorance amount unto at preſent.

Thoſe workings of the Soul which aſpire upwards, may be turned into good, and help to order the Converſation aright towards God and towards Man. As the Lord is greater and above all, ſo let Men ſhew themſelves in Subjection unto him in all things, and then they may be as great Spirited as ever they will: *Mind not high things*, Rom. 12. 16. Such that are ſo only in Opinion, but they are low in Reality and Truth; for it is all but the *higheſt part of the Duſt of the World*, *Prov.* 8. 26. The moſt glittering things here are ſcarce diſcernable, if you go up yonder Mountain. What are they then to the high and lofty place, the Inhabitation of Eternity? *Let us lift up our Heart with our Hands to God in the Heavens*, Lam. 3. 41. *Set your Affections on things above*, Col. 3. 2. There exceed if you can. *That Chriſt may dwell in your Hearts by Faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in Love. May be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the Breadth and Length, and Depth and Height, and to know the Love of Chriſt which paſſeth Knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulneſs of God*, Epheſ. 3. 17, 18, 19. Here the Soul may ſtretch every way, till it burſt forth into Immenſity and Glory.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

OF AFFLICTIONS In General.

A Digreſſion concerning Words; of Sorrow, Melancholy, Sickneſs, Pain, Poverty, and other Adverſities

HAving in the foregoing Chapters ſpoken of the Evil and Good which are ſet before Mankind, how the one is to be choſen, and the other avoided; it remains to inſiſt ſomewhat on thoſe Evils which are not ſo much in their power abſolutely to eſcape, but if any help can be found out either to Comfort under, or that even theſe may turn into Good. It is the manner of Gods wonderful and gracious dealing towards the Children of Men, to lead them from Vanity to a Subſtantial, then a glorious Being; to bring them from Imperfection to Perfection; from Miſery, nay, making that tend unto, and at laſt be changed into a greater Happineſs. This is the favour he hath unto his own People; but for thoſe who are Strangers and Unconverted he uſes ſuch means to reduce them. When the nature of Man is ſo impatient of Affliction, that he is preſently for Eaſe and Deliverance, of whom ſhould he ſeek but of the Lord moſt Mighty, who for our Sin is juſtly diſpleaſed. And what is more Reaſonable then to forſake that, which is the cauſe of ſo much Vexation? Read and conſider well, *Deut.* 4. 29, 30, 31. Never any one that turned from every evil way, and manifeſted this to be ſincere by Obedience for the future, but found good hereby. Rom. 8. 28.

hereby. Indeed Punishment doth sometimes begin on hardened impenitent Sinners, which will be followed with what is worse hereafter; but even they had some Chastisements before which were designed for their Amendment and Repentance. What befals the Sons of Men, is ordered by wise Providence that they may come to Grace here, and Glory hereafter. Is Prosperity delightful? yet reflect throughly, it is unsatisfactory and tiresome, however we can go on with it; But then is it not desirable to continue thus? which puts the Man upon labouring for that compleat Happiness against the time he shall be taken from this. Is Adversity grievous? Compare it to Hell, and what is suffered here is little; all present Afflictions will have an end, and yet they sit heavy, How insupportable then must those be which are Eternal? this sufficiently warns to flee from the Wrath to come. Consider Men in their different Ranks and Circumstances in the World, It is ordered by God that his Promises and Threatnings should have effect upon them. *If they Obey and Serve him, they shall spend their days in Prosperity, and their years in Pleasure*, Job 36. 11. He generally gives that first, the flourishing and lightsomeness of Youth, when they are capable of knowing him; So when they grow up further if they continue in his Obedience, he turns the Mirth of that into a more solid Joy and Peace. He manifests his goodness because he makes this the first Experiment, and doth not *Afflict willingly* unless Mercy and Justice do require it. *But he giveth more Grace, wherefore he saith, God resisteth the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble.* James 4. 6. If they are Humble still, he will yet increase that, for he would give exceeding gifts unto Men, if they would not be lifted up; but when they are, he hinders or takes away the qualifications wherein they boast, or some way defeats them. So here as long as their Heart is right and stedfast in his Covenant, he continues their Tranquillity; but if they turn aside, some Adversity is laid on them. These two are the same unto the Body and Estate, as Love and Fear to the Soul and inward Man; the first is more Generous and Noble, the other proves commonly more attractive. Fear is the beginning of Wisdom, but Love is the Accomplishment and Excellency thereof. So it may be applyed to Adversity and Prosperity. He is not a right Christian who doth every thing out of fear, nor yet to whom Affliction is the principal Impulsive; for there are in both an unwillingness, and no full sincere Intention to please God.

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And what ſeems ſtrange, Thoſe who are all for their own Safety and Deliverance, having that alone in their Eye, yet do not ſufficient to obtain it; for the Promiſes and Comfort of God are to thoſe who love him, as theſe do not through Ignorance of his ways. They ſtand at the door of his Sanctuary, but do not come in; They are arrived at the entrance of Religion, but ſtop there, when they ſhould come into the inner Courts of the Lord's Houſe. from *Deut.* 4. 29, 30, 31. It appears that God accepts of ſuch a beginning if it goes on and hath its perfect work as there deſcribed; but this ſort is commonly feigned according to what is written, *Pſal.* 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. They run unto God as to a Shelter in a Storm, from which they go again when that is over. He knows the very ſecrets of the Heart, and will not be impoſed upon by Hypocriſie and Baſeneſs. But they ſhould have conſidered, that as he is then (even in their opinion) to be ſought unto for Stay and Relief, ſo he is worthy to be truſted unto at all times, and then fully reſolved to have taken him for the God of their Help, from that day for evermore; this had been well pleaſing in his ſight.

Lord! What Averſneſs is in our Nature to come unto thee? And yet whither ſhould we go, but unto thee? We are not ſufficient of our ſelves, thou art the Author of all Good, and a ſure Refuge againſt Evil: Yet we are at a ſtand and unwilling to come when thou calleſt. Thou haſt made us weak and frail, that we ſhould ſeek Help of one that is Mighty, and truſt in thee. Thou ſendeſt the Stormy Wind and Tempeſt which do near beat us down that we may know, *The Eternal God is our Refuge, and underneath are the Everlaſting Arms*, Deut. 33. 27. Thou haſt put a vanity and inſufficiency into things, that all which is to be had in this World cannot eſtabliſh a ſure Truſt, whereon Man may certainly depend. Our fellow Creatures will not, but in the greateſt exigencies they cannot help. The beſt things here are unable, others are deceitful, all of them put together cannot give Aid; they may ſtupifie for a little time, but cannot preſerve the Breath from going forth. What muſt we lie, and ſink under theſe Evils? ſurely we have been told, and him we ſhould think of firſt, There is one above who both will, and alſo can deliver to the utmoſt all that come and ſeek after him. *I will lift up mine Eyes to the Hills from whence cometh my Help:*

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My Help cometh from the Lord, which made Heaven and Earth, Pſal. 121. 1, 2. And therefore can diſpoſe every leaſt thing to our Advantage, or take away the Evil that oppreſſeth us, and reſcue from the Jaws of the Grave: and at laſt, in him though we die we ſhall live again.

In what a wretched condition is that Man in the day of Diſtreſs and Death? who hath held faſt to the World till it can give no longer Relief; when the Arm of Fleſh is withered and its poor helps fail. *They have turned their Back unto me, and not their Face, but in the time of their Trouble they will ſay, Ariſe and ſave us. But where are thy Gods that thou haſt made thee? let them ariſe if they can ſave thee in the time of thy Trouble*, Jer. 2. 27, 28. Where are thy Riches, Pleaſure and Company that thou haſt relied on, let them preſerve thee. Conſider this ye that forget God in your Health and Proſperity. He hates your putting away the thoughts of him at that time; when you ſtand off, it is then he ſpoils your Mirth. 'Tis nothing but your own Sins and Tranſgreſſions which occaſion that Enmity and ſlaviſh Fear of him, which would alſo ceaſe when the cauſe is taken away. In the evil day you might be ſafe under his Feathers; In the time of Wealth there is nothing affrightful or diſagreeable to thoſe who would live in Sence of, and thankfulneſs under him, for this would make Enjoyments yet more excellent. *O how great is thy goodneſs which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, which thou haſt wrought for them that Truſt in thee before the Sons of Men*, Pſal. 31. 19. How many ways hath our Gracious God found out, when all we like loſt Sheep have gone aſtray, to bring us back again? Even thoſe which ſeem (to the carnal and inconſiderate) more harſh and ſevere Diſpenſations of Providence are to this bleſſed end: In Mercy thou doſt Afflict them, out of pure Love and Compaſſion to their Souls.

It is a ſad Proſpect to *ſee the Tents of* Cuſhan *in Affliction*, Hab. 3. 7. to behold the Dwellings of the Sons of Men in ſo much Sorrow, Grief, Pain and Sickneſs, as if the Curſe of *Joab* was entailed on all Families throughout the whole Earth. *And there is not an Houſe but there is one that hath an Iſſue, or that is a Leaper, or that leaneth upon a Staff, or that falleth on a Sword, or that lacketh Bread*, 2 Sam. 3. 29. or hath ſome other Evil of equal kind. Surely there is a good God above all his Creatures, and how

how then can theſe things be? If at any time hard thoughts do ariſe, it is our Ignorance, and want of a through Conſideration out of his Word. Beſides what is afore mentioned, We do not lay to Heart our own Provocation, that Deluge of Sin and Ungodlineſs which hath covered the face of all Nations; (but his Grace and Revelation would put a ſtop unto it, if effectually uſed and put forth) Some Evils are ſent for Puniſhment to frighten and diſſwade people from the like things. Then the ſpot and failings of his own People are to be chaſtened here, and their Graces exerciſed, ſee *Deut.* 8. 15, 16. *Zech.* 13. 9. And further Satan is ſuffered (ſome Reaſons whereof we know, others are ſecret, but we judge of the equity of them by what are manifeſted) to walk up and down in an inviſible manner, being permitted to Afflict the Body and Eſtate, all one as to tempt the Soul. And then from *John* 9. 3. 1 *Sam.* 2. 6, 7. it may be gathered, that God to ſhew his Glory, Power and Sovereignty may do what he will with his own. As Lord of Life, he taketh away one and leaveth another in his own order, but not to us diſcernable; becauſe no reſpect is had to Age, the good or ill of the perſon that one lives longer then another. He ſends Sickneſs to this Man when another is well, to ſome it proves Mortal, and not to others. Some have more and others leſs of the Diſtribution of the good things of the Earth, without the better or worſe deſerving of the Parties. Things now ſeem uneven, but in the *Sanctuary*, and out of the *Lords Book* all may be underſtood. He is Good and Merciful ſtill. He is our *Maker* and our *Father*, from whence we are to be conſidered as *Creatures*, and then in a nearer Relation of *Sons and Daughters*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. to which laſt the great future Promiſes do relate.

Righteous art thou O Lord, when I plead with thee, Jer. 12. 1. *Clouds and Darkneſs are round about him: Righteouſneſs and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne*, Pſal. 97. 2. Though we cannot ſee through all, yet we have ſufficient revealed to be moſt fully aſſured, that he is juſt and equal. Here in the place of Faith and Tryal, many things come to paſs of which though we may in general be ſatisfied of the Goodneſs and Juſtice of God in ordering and ſuffering them ſo to be, yet we cannot give ſo particular account how it is ſo in a ſtrict ſence and ſuperlative degree,

gree, as moſt certainly it is. This is to be imputed to our blindneſs and want of underſtanding, which ſhall be done away when he comes to judge the Earth. *Judgment will I lay to the Line, and Righteouſneſs to the Plummet*, Iſa. 28. 17. All things ſhall be exactly ſtated at laſt; He is even now Righteous in all his ways, and will give a clear account how he is ſo. The things of this World are now loved and feared, but then it will appear, that there is ſo little in them, that they are not worthy to be ſpoken of or had in Remembrance. However God will not forget any Labour or Pain his Servants endured for him. They ſhall be as a Dream when one awaketh, and who is much concerned for the Pleaſantneſs or Dreadfulneſs thereof, after it is over? Call to mind the days that are paſt, recollect both the Good and Evil of them, or what was done at ſuch a place when you are removed from thence; much more will it be ſo when you are tranſlated from Time to Eternity, from Earth to Heaven. It is ſo meer a nothing, that if the Creature might be bold to ſpeak with his Maker, it will not be inſiſted on or required from Gods Hands, but what he will be pleaſed to do of his own Promiſe and Bounty; for one would think Juſtice it ſelf is not obliged to make amends for ſmall Matters, when the harm is over, and the very ſame as if it had never been at all. This ſingle Conſideration if throughly weighed, would eaſe our mind in all Afflictions: The Tranſitorineſs of them, as alſo they are vain and little; for however we Groan and Murmur, yet they are ſuch as can be endured. They are not ſo great, as we weak and frail by Nature. We further bring a delicacy and tenderneſs on our ſelves, which makes us yet more unable to bear them. Whereas if we would comply univerſally with his deſign, God would ordain Strength out of our Weakneſs; He would give us that Grace and Knowledge, if we were meet to be partakers thereof and make uſe of them, that would carry us through all trouble whatſoever: for he ſuffers none to fall on us but what is common to Men. And how know we but he to manifeſt his own Glory, doth lay the more heavy things on him that ſo weak a thing may endure them, and intend its greater Happineſs by a proportionable Reward? *For I reckon that the Sufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 18. If we did underſtand and conſider of all things, inſtead of being

ing caſt down and diſquieted, we might *Rejoyce in Tribulation.* We make ſuch a ſtir about Trouble, but there is not ſo much in it: We may reſt with the moſt full aſſurance that God is good, and for all thoſe Adverſities he ſends on us, he is all along accompliſhing the Happineſs of his Creatures, which ſhould ſtir up and continue our Love and Obedience unto him.

He would have that foretold which he will certainly do; that they ſhould be comforted in the mean time, who ſhall be delivered; that they ſhould be joyful with Hope and Expectation, wherewith they ſhall be Happy at laſt. This hath been the Method of Gods working of old, we have heard it with our Ears, and it is very acceptable unto us. *How beautiful upon the Mountains are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings, that publiſheth Peace, that bringeth good-Tidings of Good, that ſaith unto* Sion, *Thy God Reigneth.* Iſa. 52. 7. How welcome is every one that hath good news of proſperous Accidents and worldly Conveniencies? How many Meſſages of this nature have been delivered from time to time to private Perſons and Nations, which were thankfully and kindly received. What are they all come unto now? their Memorial is periſhed with them. They were ſhadows only of Good, which juſt paſſed by and are gone; this is the utmoſt of all Temporal Happineſs, and of this World. But what comes from our God is Great and Enduring; which lately was beginning, now carrying on, till it be conſummated to Eternal Ages. Great is our Lord, and highly to be praiſed for the leaſt manifeſtation he ever made thereof, and ſo is by his choſen People. *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious,* 1 Pet. 2. 7. You both underſtand and have aſſured Hope to be Partakers. Theſe prize it more, then others do great Reverſions and Expectancies they ſo much talk of, and pleaſe themſelves with.

Iſa. 42. 9. Luke 2. 25.

Pſal. 89. 15.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the Voice of his Servant, that walketh in Darkneſs and hath no Light? Let him truſt in the Name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God, Iſa. 50. 10. Who gives a glimmering, and ſendeth Light into the Soul, a comfortable Thought, or ſends him who can ſpeak a Word in Seaſon. *Comfort ye, Comfort ye my People, ſaith your God,* Iſa. 40. 1. They are to Preach the Goſpel, Heal the Sick, adminiſter Help and Remedy againſt all the Maladies of Mankind. An hard Task and not to be performed, who conſiders not from whom he com-

eth, and whose means he makes use of: Even God and his Word, which are sufficient for all this; and if they have not the due power and effect, it is not from the weakness of them, for that is stronger then Men, and he that breaks can bind up, but from the incapacity of the Subject. Who are not turned to the Lord with their whole Heart, they have no right to the Promises, and therefore receive no true Comfort; but where a People formerly Disobedient are turned unto the Wisdom of the Just, and made ready for the Lord, *His Word doth good upon them who walk Uprightly.* Blessed be God, there is Experience of this, though not so much as were to be desired; for it is but a *little Flock* and *small Remnant* of true *Israelites*, Compared with the whole of Mankind. Those who have the form of Godliness, will cry out with the wicked World upon Fancy and Imagination; but if it is a sensible Comfort against inward Evil, then the effect is had, and should not be slighted, for it is such as the Trouble was, and doth it away. The matter is easily conceivable, unless they absolutely disbelieve or cannot understand; for if an Heir of a good Estate can contentedly rub through some Inconveniencies in the mean while upon prospect of that, Why may not another do the same in hope of Heaven? If one is supported by a Father, Friend, Husband, God reveals himself to be such to every one that feareth him, and doth likewise uphold. When the Sorrow is for things pertaining to him, cannot he Comfort or Deliver? When from the World, cannot he furnish with higher Considerations? Doth he who is in pursuit of a great Advantage mind the loss of a Farthing? God who gives Breath and Food, doth also give Relief to the Soul. As the Body goes on contentedly from day to day by the strength of Meat and Raiment, Cannot also the Immortal part of us be a little quieted from time to time in its Hunger and Thirst after Happiness, till it is perfected in the due time and place? The Scriptures speak much of Comfort, Joy and Peace in the inward Man, which they know and perceive who make that the rule of their Actions, and have it fulfilled in them. Let others do the same, and they will be likewise *Partakers of the Joy and Consolation.*

The unbelieving and natural Man Laughs at all this; Will words, which are but wind, blow away Pain and Grief? It sticks faster then so. The Physitian gives visible Remedies to heal Diseases, the Lawyer shews a way to get out of encumbrances of Estate,

Estate, the Bountiful gives Money to relieve the Poor and Distressed: And indeed for worldly Vexations and Trouble, Wise Sayings may do something; But for the Man whose Trade is only in words, who takes care of the Soul which we see not, and of another World which we know not, *What will this Babler say?* he moveth his Lips, but he doth nothing.

Of Words

It will not be much besides the present purpose to describe how much force and Efficacy is in *Words*, and then to shew that they will effectually asswage Grief. Words are Thoughts expressed, which arise from, and are the workings of the mind. Set them aside, you must renounce the very Soul and Reason, and consequently Unman him. What do Words signifie? So you may ask of Wisdom, Understanding, and all those noble Faculties within, which are discovered by them. Take away these, Man is a lump of Clay, just enlivened, but withall vile and weak: A dumb & breathing Statue without use or excellency. More need not be said to lay open the Absurdity and Monstrousness of this; All will grant there is need of some Speech or Language, and there is more in it then a Voice only, for it is significative of Things as what is commonly seen, heard or talked of. Things are visible and invisible, past present and future. Now Words convey and make all these known, making invisible to be as it were visible to us past, and future present by the description it gives of them. Herein appears the excellency and reality of Words, that they represent those things which do not appear, as if they did appear. *Who shall ascend into Heaven? that is to bring down Christ from above: Or who shall descend into the deep? that is to bring up Christ again from the Dead. The Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth and in thy Heart, that is the Word of Faith which we Preach*, Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8. That speaks of God himself, of whom are all things; That declares unto us the astonishing Works of Creation, The Motion of the Stars, and the Springs of the Deep. Which comprehend in one Sentence the compass of the World and all that is therein. This we see done with our Eyes in Ink and Paper, we hear it with our Ears in a light and aiery sound, Of what we are further convinced without by the Eye of Sence. But there is one step higher which leads to further Knowledge, and applies it to our selves, shewing how we are

concerned; *The Word of Faith*, Which is that Revelation God hath made to Mankind in Scripture. The Truth whereof relies upon Divine Testimony, Miracles, Signs, Infallible Proofs. The certainty whereof may be somewhat seen from the very Nature and Connexion of things. Here are *WORDS* indeed, they are called *GREAT WORDS*, *Dan.* 7. 11. and may be seen in the foregoing verses. And not only there, but throughout the whole Scripture. *Lo these are parts of his Ways, but how little a Portion is heard of him?* Job 26. 14. This is only of what he doth to the Inhabitants of the Earth, and that is but as a Point to the whole World. This is part of Gods Will noted in a Book, that it may be for the use of those several Generation which shall pass through here: Which is of no great bulk, but take all the Libraries of the World, all that was ever Written and Printed, and besides what they have from hence, they do not contain so great and excellent words as this. The Wisdom of
Is. 55. 9. God doth as much excel Mans as his Works doth theirs; which he could have manifested in a stile accordingly, but he condescended to our infirmities that we might receive and know what concerneth us. They are not Words only, for they are both true and significative; as such they should affect us as the things themselves, for they go before and give notice of it. In things of common life Men are equally concerned at the Message as the thing it self, and provide accordingly; now the first is but a Word, so it would be the same as to the Promises and Threatnings of God if they were believed. *The Word Preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it*, Heb. 4. 2. The Will of God is as we learn from *John* 1.6,7. *That all Men through him might believe.* So we read *Acts* 28. 24, that at the first time of Hearing, *Some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not.* But would they have attended again and again for successive times, hearkened to what might be urged further, then more might have believed. Did ever any Man seriously understand and throughly weigh all the Arguments that might be brought for Faith, and yet remain an Unbeliever? It is possible through Prejudice, Ignorance, hardness of Heart; but not to a sincere and willing mind, that hath no other end but to be satisfied, whether indeed these things are so? The greater part will not

not admit of a full hearing, leaſt they ſhould believe and be ſaved, and ſo they are of their own fault Unbelievers. That place in *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. is after God hath uſed former Methods, as appears by his Expoſtulation in the foregoing Chapter, *What could I have done more for my Vineyard that I have not done in it?* Iſa. 5. 4. People may be at length unaffected and hardened under the Word, but it was at firſt through their own provocation and wilfulneſs: By not minding thereof when it would have ſaved them, they come to have no Sence thereof afterwards. But in it ſelf it is apt to produce Faith. And when it is received therewith it doth make as much, yea, more impreſſion then worldly matters, as it is of greater concernment. Thoſe *Words whereby we ſhall be ſaved*, Acts 11. 14. are as gladly attended unto, as the propoſals of temporal Conveniency and Pleaſure. The *Terrors of the Lord* do as effectually perſwade Men, as they are beaten off from ſuch a thing by its Evil and Danger. When the Heart doth Love and Dread God, it will *Melt at hearing of the Law* and *Tremble at his Word*. Hereby the Kingdom of Heaven is opened unto all Believers, for when they hear thereof it is as if they ſaw it with their Eyes. In the midſt of Life they can look into the Chambers of Death, have a Proſpect of the Horrors of Dooms-Day, and the Miſery of Damned Spirits, which raiſe ſutable Affections; and this is done by Words. *And the voice of Words, which voice they that heard intreated that the Word ſhould not be ſpoken unto them any more, for they could not endure that which was commanded*, Heb. 12. 19, 20. The Goſpel was not brought in after ſuch a terrible manner; yet it being not *in Word only, but alſo in Power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance*, 1 Theſ. 1. 5. There being the greateſt certainty that all will be fulfilled, though it be in a ſtill voice, yet it cauſes as much and a more laſting concern as thoſe had at Mount *Sinah*. Which declares all that God and Chriſt hath done for us ſince the World began, and what is now a doing, Chriſt ſitting at the right Hand of God, and making Interceſſion for us, and how we are to behave our ſelves in the mean while, and what ſhall be to Everlaſting. As now what is quickly ſpoken of is long in tranſaction, for the Words of a Minute will comprize all the days of our Life here; ſo what is, or may be ſaid of the ſucceeding one, which is very much, there will be a ſutable ſpace for fulfilling, even all Eternity. As Spiritual and Inviſible things are diſcourſed

courſed of, the hearer is ſtript and out of the Body, not minding whither he hath any Fleſh about him: As there comes a Salutation, the Babe leaps in the Womb, the Soul lifts up her ſelf at hearing of ſuch things, and is kept in from the World to come as an unborn Infant from this; knowing that her ſpiritual Nature was deſigned for ſpiritual things, all one as the Eye to ſee, and the outward Sences for things ſenſible. It is her proper buſineſs
Rom. 8. 5. to mind them, and finds a like Gratification therein, as the outward Man doth in his Employment and the good ſucceſs thereof. Let not the ſcornful Infidel come into our Aſſemblies, thence Laugh or Imagine how the one ſends forth Wind, the others gape and ſuck it in, think theſe to be the greateſt Fools, becauſe The Preacher hath ſomething for what he ſaith, but they give and have nothing, *They Sow and Reap the Wind*; yet ſtill they are the greateſt Debtors, and alſo wiſe in what they do. *If we have ſown unto you Spiritual things, is it a great matter if we ſhall reap your Carnal things?* 1 Cor. 9. 11. Neither do thou ſmile, O ungodly Man, for even that Reaſon and Inference thou pretendeſt to have for thus doing is a Spiritual thing. As are all thy Principles of Evil, thoſe black Suggeſtions which ariſe from beneath, the Imaginations of thy dark mind are not ſeen: Why canſt not thou likewiſe ſuppoſe, that they are of a Spiritual nature and real, which are from above, God and his Grace, which is written and manifeſted within us? Do not go away in a ſlight curſory Apprehenſion, but judge throughly, and even thou mayeſt come to perceive of the things, which we cannot repreſent to another, but only by the help of Words. They do as much tranſcend the natural Mans apprehenſion as Rational diſcourſes the Ignorant, and common Talk doth exceed the noiſe of brute Beaſts.

All the Affairs of this World, The Government of Kingdoms, Tranſactions of Parliament, Proceedings at common Law, Adminiſtration of Phyſick are founded upon certain Propoſitions; There are Rules and Skill as to inferiour Trades, which are known by Thought & Obſervation; and ſo all the other Actions of Mankind, both good and bad, are the reſult of foregoing Thoughts, which either are or might be made known by Words; and therefore, Why ſhould this be an Objection to Religion, which is to nothing beſides? But here is an abuſe and miſtake, the like whereof cannot be found in any other inſtance. A plain Evidence, there is an Enemy which doth ſtrangely befool Mankind

Mankind as to this one thing. I mean that Deceit of resting in Words only, as meer Devotion, Reading or Hearing the Scriptures and Sermons, or talking Godly without complying with what is prayed for, and being doers of the Word. One would think what *Moses* doth so often repeat was Impertinent, *Hearken O Israel unto the Statutes for to do them*, Deut. 4. 1. This and the like phrase is repeated over and over in *Deuteronomy*, and in innumerable places throughout the Scripture. One might know as much without being particularly told thereof. Yet the Wisdom of God fore-seeing this Deceit doth so often caution against it. Nothing is more common in these days then the work done, going to Church and there is an end. But what is written in Gods Book, and done in his Worship, every least Syllable and part thereof is significative. And who doth not think or do thereafter that Mans Religion is Vain, and he is to *have his Portion with Hypocrites and unbelievers*. Here is also a Lesson for those who instruct others, *Who say and do not*, Mat. 23. 3. *Thou which Teachest another, Teachest thou not thy self?* Rom. 2. 21. Dost thou not conclude thy self, because thou speakest against them which do such things, and dost the same? Herein appears the Justice of God that all those who fall under it shall even Condemn themselves, and being convicted in their own Conscience, shall subscribe to that as just and equal. But what Wicked Men do in their own private Thoughts, these do with the Mouth outwardly. This proclaims our Judge Righteous, because the Offenders affirm Punishment due for such things, but themselves Wicked and Foolish that still do the same. It is a Marvellous thing that Reasonable and Wise Men should be deceived after this manner. Whence doth it proceed? but from the subtlety of the Devil, and that degree of Unbelief which would make it all pass for Words only, even in those who profess to Believe and Teach the same. There should be agreement between Thoughts, Words and Actions; for if the second do vary, it is a Falshood and Lye; if the third, it is Dissimulation and Hypocrisie. Cleanse the Fountain, see that thy Thoughts be right and good, then let thy Words and Actions be accordingly. Let these be put forth and go together for saving thy self and those that hear thee. Let them take from thy Mouth to

turn

turn into good Thoughts and Actions for themſelves, and tell unto others.

It may be ſeen by this time, that the Man whoſe *Trade is of Words*, is as honourable and neceſſary as any. And though he doth ſpeak of another World, that is not Vain, for it is the leaſt part of the World where we Inhabit. It is not another World, but another part of the World as a Room of an Houſe. This is ſeen with our Eyes, and much more to be underſtood by Reaſon and Perſpectives. There is ſomething Above and ſomething Beneath, whither the Spirit doth go when the Body is laid in the Grave, and that to ariſe again. This conſideration is unpleaſant, and therefore Men are ſhy and afraid of thoſe who put in mind hereof. Whereas we are likewiſe Men ſubject to the ſame things. And why ſhould they refuſe to think of that before-hand which will certainly be? when this fore-thought would render them ſafe if it were throughly given way unto. Mankind need not be in Perplexity, Fear or Stupid Inconſideration; for there are laid down aſſured Principles how they may be Happy, which are impoſſible to fail, for then we muſt be nothing at all. So none need be enraged againſt thoſe as *Tormenters of the Earth*, who are Inſtruments of Peace and Safety. Only let us be Submiſſive and Obedient unto that Mighty One above, and then no Evil can poſſibly happen unto us. *Fear, and the Pit, and the Snare are upon thee, O Inhabitant of the Earth*, Iſa. 24. 17. But there is a way ſhewed how thou mayeſt eſcape and be freed from them all. If thou were left to thy ſelf, or wouldſt go on unmindful, thou wouldſt fall unto them.

Heb. 11. 7.

What doth preſerve from the great Danger and Evil, this doth likewiſe adminiſter Relief to the leſſer Griefs of the People. *This is my Comfort in Affliction, for thy Word hath quickened me*, Pſal. 119. 50. All Affliction (except what ſtrikes upon ſence, as Pain and Sickneſs) is the impreſſion of ſuch ſad and reſenting Thoughts; now what produces of a different kind, as when *Good Words and Comfortable Words*, Zech. 1. 13. are received in, they make glad as the other did ſorrowful, There is an alteration of the Soul, or the one are ſet againſt the other, and ſo the Vexation is leſs. We often read that *God Comforts*, Iſa. 49. 13. & 51. 12. 2 *Cor.* 7. 6. He hath left a ſtanding means in

his

his Word, which is the ſame with himſelf. His holy Spirit, who is the *Comforter*, may cauſe that to be better underſtood, and ſet it home to the Heart of Man. A lively Faith, a well grounded Hope, a cloſe and true Application of the Scriptures will give eaſe to any manner of Adverſity. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul*, Pſal. 94. 19. A Mans own fancies plague him, but what he gathers from thence do refreſh him. Let him not run haſtily, but conſider upon every verſe, and when he hath found the *Word of Conſolation*, let him ſtay and fix thereon. This is better then all worldly Comforts, for they ſtupifie, they are broken off and interrupted, juſt divert a little for the time, but ſignifie nothing at all after they are over. They are not always, and then is greater anguiſh; but however they muſt all fail at laſt. But what comes from the Fountain of Life, is a ſtream continually running; it gives conſtant Peace and Quietneſs to the Soul, and aſcends up into the Paradiſe of our God where is no Conſolation, for there is no need thereof. Again, Worldly Aid at the very time cannot give true and firm Relief, nor take off from a great Adverſity. *But the Lord is a ſtrong Hold in the day of Trouble, he knoweth them that truſt in him*, Nahum 1. 7. We know not who are Hypocrites, who partial Chriſtians; but who are Sincere and Obedient without reſerve, who underſtand and can apply the Word of God, they have that Patience and Reſignation, that Complacency and joyful Hope, which the Wicked and Diſſemblers cannot pretend unto. There is a ſenſible difference between good and bad as to the enduring of Affliction; One doth bear up and is truly Couragious under it, when they are faint or ſtupid. Truth is not to be learnt from Examples, for we cannot ſee into, and know all their circumſtances. Whilſt we reflect upon particular inſtances, we often doubt of Scripture, (for Truth is the ſame in Propoſition and Experience) whereas we ſhould in the firſt place look to what is written, and be aſſured all that is true. It is not for us, but God to judge of every Mans work, he will manifeſt the Counſels of the Heart, and then his Word will be found true by what, and how it is with them. *Thy Word is Truth*, John. 17. 17. bringing Comfort and Happineſs unto Men, but they turn aſide not complying with the terms thereof, neither are they ſuch as that requires them to be.

The design of the whole Book of God is to build us up in our most holy Faith, which comprehends the Word of Exhortation, for this follows from the other; and to teach truly the way of Salvation, this is Instruction; and the rest is Consolation, to carry us through the *Wilderness that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end*, Deut. 8. 16. So Happiness is the end of all. What more can be desired by Man? Wherefore should he set himself against that, which would do all this? It is because he is not made througly sensible of thus much. Search and try till you find the worth thereof. It is a *hidden Manna which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it*, Rev. 2. 17. Hide it in thy Heart, do not only read and get it without Book, but have the sence thereof within thee, and thou mayest come to affirm experimentally with *David*, *The Law of thy Mouth is better unto me then Thousands of Gold and Silver*, Psal. 119. 72. It will conduce more to thine Happiness then all worldly Conveniencies, for they perish when here are the *Words of Eternal Life*; they do not satisfie the Soul as these; they cannot keep off Pains and Diseases and Griefs, whereas the Grace and Wisdom arising hence prevents them many times, and shews the way to the favour of God, who comforteth those that are cast down, and delivereth *Israel* out of all his Troubles, putting such an end to them, that it was better to have had, then to have been without them. In the worst of Evils they have greater cause for Joy then Sorrow. *Blessed is the Man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose Hope the Lord is: for he shall be as a Tree planted by the Waters, and that spreadeth out her Roots by the Rivers, and shall not see when Heat cometh, but her Leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the Year of Drought, neither shall cease from yielding Fruit*, Jer. 17 7, 8.

The Sayings of Philosophers and Wise Men may a little asswage some kind of Trouble, but are insufficient to support under a great and long Adversity; Whereas the Scriptures afford Hope and Comfort to the greatest that befall Men. They may alleviate for Inadvertency and Folly, and prevent it in some measure; the Word doth the same, and much more by providing against the Evils of corrupt Nature which are the cause of all Sorrow; It doth also shew a way for what is past and unavoidable, and admonishes to Sin no more, least worst things befall us. The

Dictates

Dictates of Morality and Humane reaſoning may do ſomewhat as to ſelf-Vexation, leſſer injuries and reproaches from others, inconſiderable loſſes and ſuch like; but for the greater Miſeries can find no help as the frailty of Mans Nature, dangerous Diſeaſes, fears of Death, doubtfulneſs of the ſucceeding State, how to ſecure future Happineſs and avoid Miſery. Here the antient Sages are Dumb, and they cannot tell what to ſay. They are in Perplexity and Amazement themſelves, how then ſhould they conſult for others? They were lifted up with a conceit of the Benefit they did unto Mankind, when their Conſolatory diſcourſes could avail only as to thoſe light things which might be laughed away, or Couragiouſly born; Or the wicked Men of our days find remedy againſt by Pots and Company; for if things were ſo as they ſaid, this laſt was a ſure Relief. They might indeed regulate the diſorders of Fancy and Opinion; But for what did really make Men miſerable by making the Powers of the Soul, what did torment and endanger the Body is by Philoſophers left remedileſs. They would blunder out ſomething, which was ridiculous conjecture or uncertainty. As, *What is ſuffered here, would have an end*, which the meereſt Ideot knew as well as they. *None is Happy before Death*, A ſad Conſolation to thoſe who knew not what ſhould be after that; and when they did ſurmize it would be an utter end, how abſurd muſt their Arguing be? As if Man was made only for Miſery, and his utmoſt Happineſs was to be freed from that and be no more for ever. What is more miſerable in Life, then to be willing to die? To have an impatient deſire after eaſe and Happineſs, but to find none till become without Sence or Capacity. Some of them did go further as to talk of Immortality and a future State, of this with much doubting; but then they did raiſe the Fears of Mankind, of what ſort it would be, whether Happineſs or Miſery. They would ſpeak moſt of Glory, Liberty and the *Eliſian Fields*. This was inſiſted on as a Mighty word of Conſolation for all the Evils here; But then the miſtake and deluſion was (which conſidering Men did ſpie out and therefore received no aſſurance) even what they were forced to grant when they came to diſcuſs it particularly, that there were two kinds of Futurity, Reward and Puniſhment, and they knew not exactly what Men were to do to obtain the one, what to leave undone to avoid the other. Their Ignorance as to this kept the World in ſuſpence, did raiſe their Horrour and Dread, but not allay it; What they

would have ſuggeſted as a Deliverance from Trouble, they could give no certainty but worſe might abuſe for us in the ſucceeding Condition. They might impoſe upon the vulgar with their plauſible Speeches and Eloquence, but Men that could examine Conſequences did not give ſo much heed to them.

Neither is this any Argument againſt Chriſtian Religion, becauſe it happens ſo now: Common People and Women do gladly hear thereof, when Politicians and thoſe who would paſs for Wiſe Men among us, do not ſo much mind it; for this Diverſity is to be obſerved. They of old did ſlight vain Philoſophy, but it was after they had ſearcht its Principles, and found them only conjectural and fallacious; whereas the Men of our times contemn our Faith and Practice without Examination, for let them admit this throughly, and then ſpeak lightly thereof if they can. This is the Policy of Satan whereby his Kingdom ſtands, he would not let them try what he beats them from, for if they ſhould, they would not continue with him. This is the difference of Truth and Falſhood, the one appears more true by the Touch-Stone, the other falſe. The only Argument againſt Truth is to put it off, the way to reſiſt is to be at a diſtance, and come not near it. Thus *Paganiſm* ſpread and continued of old. Thus Chriſtianity was endeavoured to be ſtifled, and its further increaſe hindred. Here is the reaſon that of old Men did walk in their own ways, and even of thoſe that do ſo at this preſent time. They were willing to be Happy then, and unwilling to be Miſerable, and ſo are now; when they were in Affliction or Trouble, they were willing to be eaſed and delivered, ſo they are now. The Truth was not ſo clearly manifeſted to the greater part of the World. *The times of this Ignorance God winked at*, Acts 17. 30. He made Men of ſuch Faculties and Powers to ſee what they could bring forth, and now he hath given more aſſiſtance by further Revelation, if any thing may be done yet more. God makes Men now as he did from the Beginning, with the ſame Reaſon, Inclinations, Deſires, Fears and Averſations: we who ſtand in theſe latter days on the Earth, wherein iniquity doth abound with more Weakneſs and Sorrow, have alſo more helps againſt them from Scripture, which is given by Inſpiration from God, and therefore muſt be better and more certain then of Mans Invention and Wiſdom.

That

That hath been disproved and found Vain, when there is help to be had of God. *It is better to trust in the Lord then to put confidence in Man*, Psal. 118. 8. Some have sought Happiness in this thing, and some in that, so for Relief in Adversity; *But we will remember the Name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright*, Psal. 20. 7, 8. This is true in seeking after Happiness and Prevention of Misery by other Men or our own Wisdom and ways; they all are disappointed, for it is to be had in God only. The Men of this World look after good in Flesh, and so they would keep off Evil; but when that is stricken and begins to fade, when it cannot relish by reason of Pain, and the anguish of Spirit doth so break forth that this is not able any longer to pacifie, then they resort to the Wisdom of Mans words, but that will not profit nor deliver them; So they must lie down under their Calamities, expecting worse things, or come unto God and his Word. What an Argument is this to overcome the averseness and obstinacy of Mans nature? There is Invitation for the greatest Sinners. *Come unto me all ye that Labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; Take my Yoke upon you*, Mat. 11. 29. Let them keep Gods Commandments, and so they may have that *Hope of eternal Life, which God that cannot lie promised before the World began*, Tit. 1. 2. This gives satisfaction concerning that great doubt of Futurity; There is a way shewed by patient continuance in well-doing (which any one may that will comply with, and put forth the Principles of Good in him) to partake of the blessed Immortality. Rom. 4. 20. If it were not to derogate from *Faith by which God is Glorified*, I could lay down how our Religion relies upon the greatest certainty that possibly can be, for the Happiness and Safety of Mankind. So where Philosophy was at a loss, this helps and gives firm establishment to the Man as it shews unto him how his Condition shall be after Death, according as he orders his Conversation now. It may be said, he need not trouble himself with things afar off, yet they may be nearer then he is aware, even to Morrow; The time after he is gone out of the World, is manifestly longer then whilst he is in, and will as certainly be; so he is equally obliged to be concerned about it.

It is a ſad caſe when one muſt be forced to borrow Comfort from the other World, for then commonly none is to be had in this, whereof we are moſt aſſured becauſe we are herein, but the other is to come and of doubtful Expectation, Shew us ſome Relief here. Such are the ſuggeſtions of Unbelief, which yet may be anſwered by Sence and by Reaſon; for our Eyes behold other parts of the World then what we are in now, the Spirit from within teſtifies that we are not here in our proper place, Experience aſſures we muſt depart hence in a very little time, The natural Underſtanding leads up to the Knowledge of God who made and governs all things. We can well ſuppoſe that he who gave a Being, and ſo many Conveniencies for one part of us, can alſo provide for the other: As he is the *Father of Mercies*, ſo the *God of all Conſolation*; we taſte and ſee them, ſo we may perceive this alſo. The nouriſhment of the Body according to his appointed means ſprings from the Earth whence it was taken, ſo likewiſe doth the true Comfort of the Soul, according to its Original come from above, the *Father*, the *Word* and the *Spirit*. There is nothing below ſutable to this Spiritual and Reſtleſs part of us. If we had Comfort only in the things of this World, we were of all Creatures moſt Miſerable, for they have what ſatisfies from what is before them, but not we being deſigned to Thirſt and Labour after greater things.

Pſal. 145. 16, 19.

A Voice was heard in Rama, *Lamentation and bitter Weeping*, Rachel *Weeping for her Children, refuſed to be Comforted for her Children, becauſe they were not*, Jer. 31. 15. So it is all the World over, people are irrecoverably deprived of perſons and things. Nothing can countervail the loſs of them, but hope of having and meeting them again, for which we are beholden unto a Reſurrection and another State. It is manifeſt they are not had here again, and we are tormented with earneſt longings after them, and have real thoughts of ſeeing them yet again, which were never put in our nature in Vain. Thus Man dieth not as a Beaſt dieth; for there are no ſuch affections from the Dam or others of the Herd, as we have concerning Relations, Friends and Acquaintance. Saith the *Meſſias*, our Lord, *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you that in me ye might have Peace, in the World ye ſhall have Tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the World*, John 16. 33. If the Heavens were not ſometimes opened, and a little

little dew did descend from above; If we had not sometimes little sprinklings of the Divine Favour; If we had not recourse to that Book where *the words are pleasant as an Honey-Comb, Sweet to the Soul, and Health to the Bones*, Prov. 16. 24. We should have a weary and tiresome Journey through this place, for here is no rest and nothing proper for us. How prophetically do Men speak of Futurity before it was plainly revealed? *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord, saith dying Jacob.* Gen. 49. 18. Words seem to come in without Connexion on the former, as Light immediately sprung into the Soul, a full assurance then of what he had faintly hoped and fore-thought of his few and evil days, and now it was beginning to be accomplished. *I had fainted unless I had believed to see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living*, Psal. 27. 13. This is not, for all here are dead or dying, so we are as soon as we begin to draw Breath. Even the Inhabitants of the earthly *Canaan* do not boast of the Happiness which arises from the Ground, of their Health and Plenty; but of the Goodness and loving Kindness of the Lord, of their Trust in him. Much more should those under the Gospel, *Who are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time*, 1 Pet. 4. 5. *Let not your Hearts be troubled, Believe in God, Believe in me*, John 14. 1. The Sence of him above, under whose good Providence we live all our days, those *many Mansions in his House*, verse 2. So there is room for us if we use his Grace to become meet, these are greater Comforts then the World can give, which are not to be despised nor cast off as a reserve, for compare them a little with yours ye worldly Minded and Unbelievers. The reason why you set them at naught, is from Want and Ignorance. *But wo unto you that are Rich, for yet have received your Consolation. Wo unto you that are Full for ye shall Hunger; Wo unto you that Laugh now, for ye shall Mourn and Weep*, Luke 6. 24, 25. Being puffed up with Sensuality, and your Souls become as it were of the same nature with the Body, they begin to relish the same Enjoyments also, and to approve of them. You now care for nothing more, but you shall be taken from these things. You who reject the good things of Gods Kingdom now offered unto you, shall then lament the refusal of them. Will you lightly esteem of that which doth ever remain, when those things are done away which you highly value now? Only be

Wise

Wiſe in time, conſider of that before hand which you muſt at length be ſenſible of whither you will or not. Try and be acquainted and your ſelves will affirm (notwithſtanding all Pleaſures, Enjoyment, Company and Recreations; the two firſt make Brutiſh not Happy, the others make unmindful for a little while, but do not prevent Miſery) yet in the midſt of Health, Life and Vigour, much more in the time of Tribulation, There is no ſuch true Happineſs and ſincere Comfort, as what ariſes from God, and the things of another World.

Of Sorrow.

Evil doth beſet and fall upon us in the threefold capacity of Mind, Body and Eſtate; which doth Afflict as it diſturbs and is contrary to the regular Order of each. Indeed they (eſpecially the two firſt) are connected, that if the one ſuffers the other doth alſo. The Souls that God hath made may be compared to ſo many Rivers, which as they all come from him, ſo are they to run through the Earth, and to diſembody themſelves again into that infinite Ocean of Being and Happineſs. Now there is one Labours to divert the Stream, to make it run another way, or ſtop its courſe. The firſt is ſinful Pleaſures, the ſecond is Negligence and Sloth. The Soul hath ſome fore-Knowledge which way ſhe is to go, and an Inclination towards the right, and thence whatſoever doth hinder and ſeek to turn aſide doth alſo diſturb. If ſhe would keep to this firſt Principle, carefully obſerving the Original tendencies of her Nature, and ſuſpect every thing that doth in the leaſt thwart that, all the Devils in Hell could never deceive her, for ſhe might know the Connexion of Sin and Sorrow. *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil*, Rom. 2. 9. This contradicts the Pure and Spiritual part of us, which raiſes thoſe ſeveral kinds of Sorrow. So the cure for it is by taking heed againſt Sin which is the Troubler of the Man, By Repentance as to the paſt, and watchfulneſs for the future. Sorrow doth ariſe from other Afflicting Objects of Body and Eſtate, and is the reſentment of them; but confine it to the Soul, and it is occaſioned by Sin only, as that is divided in Evil, Falſhood and Folly; all which are contrary to that Good Truth and Wiſdom wherewith ſhe is endued, and is to improve theſe Talents to the glory of our Maſter, who will give a Reward according as every one is

is found Meet and Faithful. There is a Vexation all along, which would be sensible if not smothered, when we do not Trade to his Use; So on the other hand there is Joy and Complacency when we do. *Great Peace have they which love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them*, Psal. 119. 165. *And the Ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to* Sion *with Songs, and everlasting Joy shall be upon their Heads: They shall obtain Joy and Gladness, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away*, Isa. 35. 10.

That propension and natural tendency which is in Mans nature to know God, and to come into the way of his Commandments, the workings of Grace and regrets of Conscience, that Dissatisfaction and Restlesness of mind for not doing what he ought, and all those several things which incline to Repentance and Obedience, do pass in the World for pure Melancholy. It is an Aspersion cast upon sincere Religion where it hath an influence upon the Life and Actions, where is universal carefulness against Sin; and who will not comply with the meer outward Divertisment of Evil, Lying and Foolish Talking, he shall be Obnoxious to the Character of a dull and miserable Soul. All Thoughts of God and the things pertaining to him are by the Ignorant and Ungodly thus esteemed; and further are those, *Having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. Whatever is more then their size, they would impute to the blackness of Blood, an heavy flegmatick Constitution, or such like. This is one of the Devises of Satan to keep people off from Religion in general, then from the Truth and Sincerity thereof, by raising such a Report which is commonly received; and whilst he suggests not to give way to Melancholy, he turns Men aside from the way of Peace, Life and Blessedness. All Religion is irksome and tedious to those who are unacquainted therewith, and so it is with them who practice it a little, but not throughly. Of Melancholy.

The Scripture is fulfilled as it speaks of that *Enmity against God*, Rom. 5. 10. Rom. 8. 7. that *Root of bitterness*, Heb. 12. 15. Acts 8. 23. that Aversness and *Alienation*, Col. 1. 20, 21. that Hatred and Opposition of Good, the Stubborn and Perverse Spirit, the Trouble and Restlesness, those Fears and sad Expectations in the Wicked, which are the cause of all this. They may come to the Ordinances and outward Profession, and yet remain

the ſame ſtill, *not transformed by the renewing of the mind.* The Word is found true as it ſpeaks of the reaſon of theſe things, and why may it not be believed as it mentions the *Love of God*, being *reconciled to him, delighting in God and that which is Good, that Joy, Peace* and *Gladneſs of Heart*; thoſe loving and familiar Appellations of *Father, Friend, Husband*, the expreſſions of Kindneſs to us, and our Thankfulneſs and Praiſe. *The Lord Reigneth, let the Earth Rejoyce*, Pſal 97. 1. *Truly God is Good to* Iſrael, *even to ſuch as are of a clean Heart*, Pſal. 73. 1. Are all theſe written in Vain, or for our Comfort? Do others by ſad Experience confirm the Truth of what is aforementioned, and have none the happy feeling thereof? Surely there are ſome whom the Scripture calls *Bleſſed*, who have the favour of God and are careful to preſerve it in all Duty and Obedience. It may be obſerved there are two manner of ways in the World; Some in all their Actions have Conſcience towards God, others not. The Scriptures declare the effect of both by *Peace* and *Trouble*, one part is ſenſible of the diſorder within, And why may not others feel, know and teſtifie of the good Promiſes? For themſelves might alſo if they would do the ſame things. It were eaſie to make things clear, if that Prejudice was taken away of judging by Examples and humane Sayings more then from divine Teſtimony and Truth. Hypocrites and many who *ſeem to be Religious* (but the Apoſtle by failure in one Chriſtian Duty pronounces their *Religion to be Vain*, Jam. 1. 26.) do moſt oppoſe what is the Doctrine of Scripture. They accuſe their Brethren of Melancholy who abound in the Work of the Lord, who ſpend their time in Meditation of his Law. They call Contempt of the World Stupidity, the avoiding of ſinful Compliances and appearances of Evil a ſowre moroſe Temper, not fit to live amongſt Men; The not running too much after ſenſual Pleaſures, is ſencelelly ſtiled an heavy and ſluggiſh Diſpoſition, which is not refined enough to receive them. And what is done by the Grace and Fear of God, are the effects of meer Melancholy. Every avoiding of Sin and good Action to which a Miſconſtruction can be applied, is by them cenſured. It is not ſo much minded what the prophane Sinner ſaith, but what comes from them who *make a fair ſhew in the Fleſh, yea*, the *Teachers of the Law*, this is entertained by Inquiſitive and Conſidering Men. It is dangerous for any *to bring an evil Report upon the good Land*, but worſe for thoſe who

Numb. 13. 32.

who pretend to have *ſearched it*; for though not in expreſs words, yet by manifeſt Concluſion they do the ſame, as, We muſt ſerve God, and that ſo much which is pleaſant, but what is more is Melancholy, for ſo are thoſe Calumniated who go further, and find more Benefit then themſelves. It is ſurmiſed ſuch a thing is Harſh and impracticable, ſo he is thought an hard Maſter who requires, and that his Commandments are grievous, which is abominably Falſe. Where the Love of God is fixed, that makes all things eaſie and delightful done in Reference to him. They have Peace and Satisfaction all their days, a well grounded Hope, and are ſecured againſt the terrors of Death. They do every thing of a cheerful mind, and not grudgingly.

But where the work is only done, and people are glad it is over; Whoſe Holy and Spiritual things are left as ſoon as out of the Cloſet or Congregation, and care for no other Hearing or Converſation thereof: Who run on in their manner of ſerving God, and certainly conclude themſelves Right becauſe they have the Courſe and Generality of the World on their ſide, though they have been miſtaken all along in matters of pure and ſincere Religion: Who do not univerſally prove what they do, and if they did, could find no Rejoycing in it; Indeed their way may become familiar and cuſtomary to them, for vain Hopes and Formality if not examined may produce ſome Gladneſs and Exultancy; And then they reject what is more for Melancholy: Theſe will admire ſo many words ſhould be made about what they conceive and do in ſhort. They may look upon what is here and afore-offered as a parcel of Melancholy Notions and contradictory to the Argument of Happineſs, which they fancy as only apt to breed Diſturbance and ſadneſs of Mind. But if the whole Work of Religion might be made ſo ſhort, Why did God make ſo large and full a Revelation in Scripture, which is to be *ſearched* and contains infinite matter? Why did he afford ſuch a long time to Man upon Earth, to *underſtand and ſeek God*, if it might have been done ſo quickly? His doings are all Wiſdom, and no more then what is Neceſſary. Religion is not a Buſineſs of ſuch ſudden diſpatch as ſome would falſly imagine and make it. The general prejudice againſt Truth is, that it makes Melancholy; But he that will not be thus Melancholy, ſhall be Miſerable for ever. We learn from 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 13. They are to *re-*

John 5. 39. Pſal. 14. 2.

give the Love of the Truth who would be saved; from hence spring their Principles of acting aright, and they must know before-hand to avoid what is Evil and Destructive. The Knowledge of Truth brings unto God who hath established all things, under whose shadow we may be secure from all Evil and Danger.

Indeed there may be mistaken ways of pleasing him, which have no Footstep in his Word; or a furious unwarranted Zeal, which exposing to Trouble and Inconvenience without his Acceptance, may run out of Breath in a wrong Road, and so spend it self in wearinesse and doubt of mind. There may be an *over-much Righteousness* in not Commanded things, but in keeping close to the lines of known Duty, in observance of the Precepts is application and hope of the Promises, there is Approbation of Conscience, *Blessed are those Servants who are so doing*. It is called a *Work of Faith* and *Labour of Love*, 1 Thes. 1 3. but still they contentedly do it, looking for the Reward and Rest, as they have a little in the mean while to carry them through here; yea, this is an Antidote against Melancholy, for they would be so otherwise: the restless and busie Faculties of Man must be doing somwhat, though less troubled when in any acting, yet are uneasie if not on their proper Business, as Religion is of the mind and outward Calling of the Body; and this in subserviency to the other. A strange wresting of things, to call that Melancholy which only prevents and keeps it off; a Disturbance which belongs to our Peace; to be driven away and avoided, which is the chief Good to be sought after and cherished. Isa. 5. 20.

None are more Melancholy then who seem to decline it, for their utmost Happiness lies in Stupefaction and the studied Arts of unmindfulness; but take away these and they sink into Dumpishness, or are tortured in mind. They having either a dead and troubled Heart, do not know what Peace is, and must find out some cure for that which would bring them to Repentance or Desperation. O foolish Sinners, who hath bewitched you? Why will you not suffer Gods design to be answered in you? for he would have you turn from your Sins and Vanities; the guilt whereof if permitted to stir, causes Sorrow; if stifled, heaviness of Mind: All this is a sad Earnest of worse things to come; if not prevented this only way. You must either comply or smo-

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ther; but how unreasonable is the last? for if you could put away instead of putting afar off the evil Day, it will come at the appointed time do what you can, you only shut out the Sence thereof: If in driving away Melancholy, you could utterly beat off Death; If you could hinder your Souls from being stript naked and sent into the other World where are no Company, Pleasure or Recreations to harden; If you could escape the day of Judgment and the dreadful Event thereof; then it were some advantage to chase away Seriousness, but as things now stand, it is the greatest Folly and Danger. Be perswaded to endure it here for a little time, Dare to be somewhat dull for a day or two, and suffer the Irksomeness of what you have done in Iniquity, and begin the Work of Righteousness. If people could be prevailed upon to be Melancholy a little (and they must, or suffer Eternally what is worse) they would be Christians in Deed and in Truth, for this is the great hindrance with all, High and Low, Wise and Ignorant: Religion makes dull, and therefore they keep off. Here again is to be repeated the former Observation. Things at first make a shew of the contrary; Whatever brings Happiness and real Good to Mankind, hath a slight appearance of Misery and Evil. The Wisdom from above doth bring Peace, Satisfaction, Delight and Assurance; but the Enemy who lets from all that is Good would Suggest, it raises Trouble, Disquiet, Fear and such like. Many think of what is aforementioned, as dull things, because they do not make much outward noise and merriment. But they do not understand the true Happiness of a Man. *Peace*, &c. What can be more desired? Would they be Children always in Laughter or Crying? now up in excessive Mirth, and down again in Dejectedness and Anguish? The first at the very instant doth not satisfie, and there is weariness in it; the other doth really Afflict. It is desirable to be between both in a sober composed State, to be as other Creatures pleased with themselves. And though there is a knowledge of Imperfection and Vanity, yet to go on contentedly to a better State, and comfort himself in the mean time with hopes thereof. He is just as a Man should be, for the Mouth was not made always to be contracted: Who is endued with real Wisdom, cannot take pleasure in Fools Mirth or an idle Jest. Who are passed over the festivities of Childhood and Youth, cannot still shew themselves transported with Vanities: Who have seen and fully observed the same heretofore, 2 Cor. 7. 8, 9, 10.

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are not to be admired if not lifted up with little Novelties: Whose Converſation is in Heaven, and their Affections on things above, ſhall they be blamed if knowing the difference, and they do not ſhew forth the like rejoycing at the common Accidents and little things here below? Who do not reſort to Drink and Company to cheer up their Spirits, or ſtill the Diſorder within, for they are in a right frame already. The Sea within is ſmooth and like a molten Looking Glaſs, where they can reflect and be ſatisfied with their inward likeneſs.

It is Impertinent, if not Sinful to diſſwade them from Holy things who delight therein: As long as they can go on in ſuch a courſe all their days, let them do as much as Gods Grace ſhall direct them. Another knoweth not what Comfort they find therein, how they have their Body in ſubjection, and to what a meaſure of Love and Spirituality they are arrived; So they may do thoſe Acts without tiring, which others cannot now that are not yet ſo far attained, but may attain. The Scripture makes frequent mention of thoſe who do not enough for Heaven, but nothing againſt them who do too much, for there is no danger of exceeding. That particularly lays down all things neceſſary and relating to Mans Salvation, and alſo ſpeaks of his temporal Happineſs in Subordination to that, yet there is not one word mentioned concerning Religious Melancholy or Mopiſhneſs. Without queſtion, there were ſome in the days of the inſpired Writers, whoſe Converſation was obnoxious to that Character as now. What the World calls Melancholy in Scripture Phraſe is *Sorrow*, and to that ſomewhat is ſaid by way of Comfort; but it was to be in God, nor to take people off, nor to have recourſe to thoſe Arts as Sinners do. The beſt way of ſolving Fears, Scruples and Diſquiet, is to give a people a right underſtanding of them; but let none reſort to the Pleaſures of Sin and idle Company, which increaſe, but not cure them. We read of the Temptations and Devices of Satan, Spiritual Deſertions, Ignorance, intervening Sins and Infirmities which cauſe Vexation and Trouble: but nothing of illneſs of Blood or Bodily Conſtitution, there is no intimation of this in Holy Writ: But it is the Opinion of late Phyſitians which hath been received ſo far by Divines, that to improve this notion of Melancholy a little further, and the other of Enthuſiaſm would be the ready and effectual way

way to *cauſe the Holy One of* Iſrael *to ceaſe from before us*, Iſa. 30. 11. For let all regrets of Conſcience paſs for Melancholy, and the workings of Gods Spirit for Enthuſiaſm or Fancy, inward Religion is in danger to be deſtroyed, which is the moſt ſenſible Evidence of the Truth and certainty thereof. That can never fail, but the Knowledge thereof may be loſt; as ſeveral times already it hath near been, but will not be ſo again becauſe of the Promiſes of God, which are near at hand, even at the very door to be accompliſhed.

Is there then nothing in bodily Conſtitution? Not ſo much as is pretended, and that again may be altered. The corruptible Body preſſeth down the Soul which is common to all; and that difference of temper in particular perſons, which yet is not ſo much as commonly talked of, ſerves for an Exerciſe and Tryal of the greater Vertue: That the Soul may yet aſcend and lift up it ſelf. And then the Power of Gods Grace and their complying with it can, and doth actually change the natures of Men. That natural tendency and Serioufneſs was therefore put in them to move towards their right end; And alſo finding no true Happineſs here, they are prompted to look out for one to come. It is ſo ordered by the good God that all Mankind might be ſaved and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, ſome more this way, ſome another, according to their Inclinations of Soul, Body and Condition of Life. One hath the Advantage in this thing, another in that; but ſome Degree of what is underſtood by the Word Melancholy is communicated to all. Frollick and Mirth are more incidental to Youth, But there it is a ſtriving againſt nature; for if not ſupported by outward Helps and Objects, it doth fall down into Serioufneſs, ſo it is of riper Age. The great miſtake is, we obſerve many things without the reaſon of them. All things tend to their Center; and what is in Man moves towards his proper end, which is doing the things for which God hath made him. As the Fiſh on dry Land beats it ſelf to Death becauſe not in his own Element; As the Turtle mourns away for want of her Companion; there is an uneaſineſs even from very Childhood if not in ſome Action: So if Man were kept away from God, debarred from Company and always to be idle, he would pine away in Sorrow, which worketh Death before the time, becauſe there is ſuch a ſtrong Inclination in his nature to the firſt principally, and the others in ſubordination to him. Although Ezek. 24. 23.

Wicked

Wicked and Ungodly Men do purſue the two leſſer ends, yet forſaking the great Principal upon which the others ſhould depend, they are tormented for want of true Happineſs all their Life long, ſo that by reaſon of the wearineſs even they are willing to die. The Righteous deſire a more full Enjoyment of him, whom they have known only by Faith and ſeen darkly. Their *Soul is athirſt for God. When ſhall I come to appear before God?* they are more induced to long after it, becauſe of the Vain and imperfect ſtate they are in here; they do indeed deſire Immortality, and ſhall have it. The Wicked being conſcious whom they have deſpiſed and forgotten, they wiſh to Sleep for ever, for they had rather ſo continue then awake and riſe up to Puniſhment. What a ſad thing it is to be deceived, and willingly ignorant of their proper End? To be reſtleſs all the way, and diſappointed at laſt? To live in a perpetual Violence and Contradiction to themſelves, to turn aſide the Soul from its natural bent. To keep her, though in Pain and Diſpleaſure, from her Center and Reſt; and at length when ſhe would have aſcended upwards, to ſink into the Bottom as a Stone. To have no true Comfort and Satisfaction in the Light of the Living, nor whilſt the days of Darkneſs draw on. *Now Conſider this ye that forget God*; Whoſe Souls are yet in the Body: Take away the weights of Sin that do clog and preſs down. Remember the days paſt before habitual Sin and evil Habits came on, to what did the Motions within aſpire and prompt unto? Before the Spirit was made unclean, did it not ſoar up towards the Father of Spirits? When it was not corrupted with Malice and Stubbornneſs, Had you not a good mind towards God? when your Deſires were Pure and Sincere, After whom were they moſt ſutably inclined? To him above, and nothing here. Then you were whiſpered by Satan, or told by his Inſtruments, to go that way was to be Melancholy, and to avoid that you did follow Sin and Vanity. Is not this really Sorrow? But it may be through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin thou canſt not tell how to get out, but thou muſt. Be adviſed firſt to forbear the outward Acts, *Waſh and make Clean*, put away your former Evil Doings, the Clouds will go off, and the Sun may again appear in its full Might. Then reſume thy former Thoughts, and do accordingly. This kind of Melancholy leads up to the *Moſt High*, from whom cometh every Good thing. Obſerve all the Commandments, but there is no need of laying any greater Burden

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on thy ſelf by performances which are not required. The Service God hath inſtituted is reaſonable, which may be done with a ready and willing mind.

Be diligent in thy Calling, for this is the Will of God, and agreeable to Peace as an Employment of thoſe powers of Body and Mind. Keep good Company, for there is a ſtrong inclination in our Nature toward this. And though now we are often ſeparated from one another by our ſeveral Buſineſs and Action, yet theſe ſhall ceaſe when the times of refreſhing ſhall come, when there ſhall be no need of Action becauſe the end is obtained. We are not now to be always in Company, for we have ſomething elſe to do, and alſo they do not continually divert through the remainders of Sin and Ignorance; though ſo much the more according as we are purged from theſe, and have leſs Avocation. All Melancholy and Diſquiet which is the ſame thing, doth ariſe from not anſwering the natural ends, and therefore the way to avoid it, is to know our own Frame, and to carefully comply with the juſt tendencies thereof.

Of Sickneſs. All irregularity and diſorder in the Fleſh is Sickneſs or Pain. *And the Lord God formed Man out of the Duſt of the Ground*, Gen. 2. 7. Then the Ground was not Accurſed, nor the Creature brought into the bondage of Corruption; ſo it is conceived he was made Immortal, but after his Tranſgreſſion Thorns and Thiſtles ſprang up, the Seed of Diſeaſes and Mortality was received in with the Juice of the forbidden Fruit. Sickneſs came into the World upon Man and upon Beaſt, and every living Creature, for they were formed out of the Ground before the Fall. They partake of the Puniſhment of Original Sin, but not ſo much of Actual and Intermedial Sins; for it may be obſerved, that they do not languiſh under pain or Ilneſs from within (unleſs by Mans Tampering and Cruelty) until what brings on their Death. Whence we learn that to avoid Sickneſs or Pain, To Hereditary Guilt let us add as little more as we can; Let us comply with Gods Law, which he hath revealed for the Benefit of miſerable and falen Man. Be Temperate in all things, uſe Labour and Exerciſe according to the meaſure God hath ordained. it is no unbecoming thing to go to the Herd and conſider their ways, for Health is a preſent and ſenſible good. We are alike

Gen. 2. 19.

Jer. 12. 4.

according to the Body with them: The different ſhape doth not alter much, as appears by their ſeveral Kinds. How is their well Being and ſound Conſtitution preſerved? Nature goes on with them according to its Courſe. They eat what is wholeſome and ſutable, without ſuperadded Sauces and Mixture. Think upon their Reſt and Sleep, which they leave off before the riſing of the Sun. See them in their goings forth and comings in, what degrees of Motion they uſe, and they are better for doing ſo much as deſigned unto. The Horſe and Ox performing due Service do better run out their appointed time, nor periſh ſooner unleſs over wrought by Tyranny or Covetouſneſs. A good Man is Merciful unto his Beaſt: Much more ſhould thoſe that are Rich have the like in conſideration for Servants and the Poorer part of Mankind. Not ſuffering them to Labour beyond their Strength, for that exhauſts and conſumes the vital Spirits; as again others do Deſtroy themſelves before their time by Sloth and Idleneſs. Moderation is excellent, and carries through all things of the World.

When the Faculties of mind are pure and free in a ſound Body, they can better exert themſelves. It is a great Bleſſing from God, ſo it is to be ſought for and preſerved by his eſtabliſhed means. *What Man is he that deſireth Life, and loveth many days that he may ſee Good? keep thy Tongue from Evil, and thy Lips from ſpeaking Guile. Depart from Evil and do Good, ſeek Peace and purſue it. The Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Cry*, Pſal. 34. 12, 13, 14, 15. This is the way to prevent loſs of Liberty, or Life from the offended Magiſtrate, Violence and Miſchief from a Quarrelling Neighbour, ſo he is ſafe as to Man; And then from within himſelf, Nothing is ſo good a remedy to keep the Body in its due Temperament, as avoiding Sin and doing commanded Duty. Gods Providence here ſtands engaged for outward Accidents and Caſualties. Sickneſs or Pain doth happen one of theſe three ways, and ſo we are taught as to each of them. *Ye ſhall ſerve the Lord your God, and he ſhall Bleſs thy Bread and thy Water: And I will take away Sickneſs from the midſt of thee*, Exod. 23. 25. He hath put a ſtanding Wholeſomeneſs and Nouriſhment in thoſe Creatures appointed for our Food; and if any Poyſon or Hurt ſhould be in them, (as that is ſeldom in common things, but rather in new Inven-

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tions of Luxury) he can by a Thought or ſome other manner divert from receiving thereof, or afterwards cauſe that it ſhall not hurt them. Nature, which is made the great Temptation to Unbelief, doth plainly manifeſt his Eternal Power and Godhead, for he firſt erected ſuch a ſtanding Courſe of things, and even now Governs it; He over-rules the whole, and diſpoſes each part thereof. So he is not to be thruſt out, but ſhould be ſought unto as well as the Phyſitians and outward Help. He in the firſt place, and they in Subordination unto him. The dull and unthankful World will cry out upon ſuch a Preſcription or Plaiſter, and therefore he ſhall have the thanks who was the Inſtrument of bringing it unto them. Whereas they might remember who made the Body; Who was it that gave Skill and Underſtanding to the Phyſitian? He can alſo turn his Counſel into Fooliſhneſs. It was God who firſt made and gave that Vertue in Phyſick and Salve to Heal, for otherwiſe a piece of Wood might do the ſame. He hath endued things with their ſeveral Efficacies and Uſes. *I taught* Ephraim *alſo to go, taking them by their Arms: But they knew not that I Healed them*, Hoſ. 11. 3. He gives, preſerves and continues our Health. But yet what is corruptible and weak, will wax old and decay. Health conſiſts in ſuch an exact diſpoſition of Humours, which is eaſily diſturbed by Violence from without, Defect or Exceſs from within. The Goodneſs and Wiſdom above doth ordain Strength out of Weakneſs, and continuance from tottering things; otherwiſe it were to be admired that we are not Sick always inſtead of being ſo ſometimes. A Sparrow doth not fall to the ground without the Will of our heavenly Father: Nor any Chaſtiſment light upon the Sons and Daughters of Men, without his Permiſſion or Order. He ſuffers ſuch an one to fall under the harm of a ſecond Cauſe, or adverſe Accident. If we would ſearch and examine to the utmoſt, then confeſs and give Glory unto God, we might many times find our Diſeaſe to be the natural effect of ſome Sin or Provocation: We became at firſt ſubject unto Sickneſs by Sin only; So if we reflect upon all our foregoing Actions and Circumſtances, There is ſome evil which inſenſibly alters and breaks the ſound Conſtitution, or brings it on Speedily and Violently. The next thing is to be humbled for the ſame, to *accept the Puniſhment of our Iniquity*, Lev. 26. 43. *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, for I have*

2 Chron. 16.11,12.

Gen.2.17.

Sinned against him, Mic. 7. 9. We must sincerely resolve, if God should spare us this time, to watch more carefully against the same for the future, now to be unfeignedly sorry for it, and to cry mightily unto God. *The King of* Israel *is a Merciful King*, he will be Appeased and Reconciled.

Behold Happy is the Man whom God Correcteth: Therefore despise not thou the Chastening of the Almighty, Job 5. 17. Then he fully perceives that false shew of Happiness, with which Fools and Blind are deluded all along: Which they might know in the mean while if they would consider it throughly, as they do ever and anon slightly. Outward things cannot give so much aid as they vainly promise. They are all passed away as a Dream, and cannot help in the greatest time of need *My Flesh and my Heart faileth, but God is the strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever*, Psal. 73. 26. If the Conscience is accused by Sin, let the Sick Man cast it forth by Confession and Prayer; and the Sea will cease from raging: The mind will become more quiet. Whether the Body dies or lives he is safe, when he hath done all things to obtain the Mercy and acceptance of Almighty God.

It is a sad Story of those who in time of Dangerous Sickness have made great shews of Reformation and Amendment, and after Recovery have returned again unto Folly. *And they have not cryed unto me with their Heart, when they howled upon their Beds*, Hos. 7. 14. Which word imports no true inward Sorrow, but an outward noise upon apprehension of Danger, which goes off with it. However God cannot be imposed upon, he knows the Thoughts long before, searches the Heart and tries the Reins, discovers the bottom and inward reserves, according to which he will judge. So it is not what they pretend, but what they will really be. Those who have been for a superficial and slight Repentance, which they did hope might avail if they should Die, but if they Recover then to return to their former evil ways, I say these should have done well to have considered, What moved them to any Repentance at all; the same should engage them to continue and perfect it. For admit you should certainly live, it is but a Reprieve only: You will be Sick again, or what is worse cut off suddenly. And then things will appear exactly at the same manner again, yea, worse for the former Hypocrisie and Dissembling. As also for that more Sin and Guilt is increased. How

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many years may be added unto your Life is not known, but it will be a ſad thing to have lived longer, to have committed more Iniquity, and ſo Die hardened, Impenitent or feigned at laſt. At firſt recovery is uncertain, for many have lulled themſelves with hope thereof, till Death hath been upon them. Many things might be urged to diſſwade people from doing Fooliſhly and Preſumptuouſly. Their own Eternal Happineſs or Miſery lies at ſtake, It is not a matter to triſle or deal deceitful with. Be prevailed upon as you tender the good of Soul and Body, to have your Repentance true and ſincere. By the Trouble or Pain of them, think of the *Worm which ſhall never die, and the Fire which ſhall not be quenched*, and which are to be eſcaped from only this way. Believe in God and Jeſus Chriſt, that all things contained in the old and new Teſtament are certainly true. Faith and Repentance are neceſſary for all Men both in time of Health and Sickneſs; which whoſo hath according to Truth is ſure, for theſe intitle unto the Promiſes of him with whom we have to do.

Health doth conſiſt in a regular Diſpoſition and due Motion of each part of the Body: None can ſee into himſelf, or tell the exact manner how as to every particular. *I was made in ſecret, and curiouſly Wrought in the loweſt parts of the Earth. Thine Eyes did ſee my Subſtance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book were all my Members written, which in continuance were Faſhioned when as yet there was none of them*, Pſal. 139. 15, 16. None of us can look into the Womb, or whilſt in Life can ſee how all the Members and Parts within do work and move, yet after the Body is dead we may perceive ſomewhat by Diſſections, which is gueſs and uncertain; for if a number of Men ſhould come into the Shop of an excellent Artiſt, ſeeing his Tools and Inſtruments only, One may think this, another that, and ſo may be divided, but can never find out the exact manner of his Art. He that ſees a dead Carkaſe unleſs he were put in mind by himſelf carrying about one of the ſame likeneſs, would be at a ſtand to anſwer the Queſtion, Was this lump ever in Life? He could never by his own Wit and Invention find out the way how it was. He would alſo admire how each part both within and without did move and actuate. So wonderful and fearful are Gods Works, which puzzle the Underſtanding of Man. Whether it were to keep of Boaſting or other cauſes, yet God doth hold our Souls in Life by hid-

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den and invisible Bands, that whatever others pretend unto, they cannot perfectly find out and see them. *The Lord Killeth and maketh Alive: He bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up*, 1 Sam. 2. 6. He hath kept this in his own Power. All the ways he hath set out for Nature to go according unto, are not yet known. Indeed many of them have been searched after, and some found: but not all, for then those Diseases would be Cured which were not first Mortal and Irrecoverable. The prevention of, and recovery out of Sickness doth depend upon the Knowledge of the Truth and right way, which being hidden to discern more thereof, is by Probability and Discourse, for hereby we come to the knowledge of what is concealed, as by looking with the outward Eye, to search out what is lost above Ground. Truth is the very Nature of things without as they are fixed and connected together, and that inferring from one thing to another is the means to find it out. Now because Consequences are diverse, True and Fallacious, Obscure and Plain; to rightly discern between them and also to apprehend, to go from things more known, unto those that are less, this is the Office and Employment of Reason. But before, and after all, *God giveth Wisdom unto the Wise, and Knowledge to them that know Understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things*, Dan. 2. 21. 22. He may at length discover those Rules and Orders concerning the Body of Man, how at first it is made for such a continuance, by what ways it moves, what keeps on its course, and what stops, that Help and Remedy may be had to each, So that more may run out the days of their appointed time. Who knows but it may be fulfilled all the World over, what is written? *Thus saith The Lord of Hosts, There shall yet old Men and old Women dwell in the Streets of* Jerusalem, *and every Man with his Staff in his Hand for very Age*, Zech. 8. 4.

Psal. 85. 11.

2 Tim. 3. 7.

Is any Sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church and Pray over him, Jam. 5. 14. The God in whose Hand all our Breath is, direct every one for the best, and let him be careful to look up to seek for Preservation and Relief, *if the Lord may raise him up.*

Of Pain. Pain differs not much from Sickness, being also an Indisposition in the Flesh, but commonly in one single part, and is the more

more or leſs Dangerous according to the Member affected. It is irkſome and grievous for the preſent, but muſt be endured till Deliverance is had. The thoughts of paſt ſoundneſs and freedom from Pain do enhaunce the preſent; but yet this Balm may ſoften, for the Pain is tranſitory. The days and hours paſt are the ſame as if expired in Pleaſure, the preſent ſlips back likewiſe, ſo the leſs is behind, and all that will have an end juſt the ſame as if it had never been at all. This is ſeldom Mortal, but if it ſhould, then care is to be had of a well grounded Hope, which ſends up to that place, *Where ſhall not be any more Pain, for the former things are paſſ'd away*, Rev. 21. 4. To obtain that is our buſineſs all our Life long before Sickneſs and Pain come on, which is a ſure Refuge and Rejoycing in the evil day. The Spirit is quiet and undiſturbed, though the Fleſh doth ſuffer. Even here God hath ordained remedies and means, ſo they are to be uſed for Recovery and Deliverance.

Thoſe which are called Afflictions of Eſtate, Many of them are ſo far without that they would not torment at all if we had no thoughts of them. If we do not hear, or forget, or are unmindful, they do not diſturb; but letting them into the Soul with worſe Circumſtances and Aggravations, here is the Sting of outward Adverſities. We admit the ſence thereof to have a deep and continued impreſſion in our minds, but what may be adminiſtred for Comfort we caſt a ſlight glance toward's that, concluding it unable to help and ſo will have none of it, or make a ſmall tryal and leave off preſently, and will not ſuffer it to have the alike ſtay and influence over us as the other hath. Thus are we partial to our own loſs, and wilfully deprive our ſelves of Contentment. This proceeds from the cunning Wiles of the Enemy, who continually lets our Happineſs, and here ſerves an end by raiſing up the ſpirit of Murmuring, and ſubtilly leads into Temptation and Sin, taking advantage of our froward and fooliſh Nature, which is preſently upon the fret, and there is a way ſhewed to get out, but we have no Heart unto it; When the Evil is upon us, God holds forth a Remedy by Grace and Knowledge; ſo we alone are to be blamed if we do not accept thereof. Sometimes we imagine it is an Evil, when it is none, which vaniſhes as ſoon as we ſuffer our underſtanding to be convinced to the contrary.

Of Afflictions of Eſtate.

Prov. 19. 3.

If

If we will not give way to that, it is just we should lie down and smart for our Stubbornness and Folly. Here the Philosophers may come in and help us by their Aphorism. *Tis opinion that vexes*, Change or take that away, and the Plague is stayed. The Wise Men of the World may do somewhat as to the imaginary Afflictions which arise from hence. But yet they could not give solid and perfect Comfort to real Grievances, because they were not acquainted with the very Nature and Establishment of things.

Of Poverty. An instance shall be in Poverty, Which if not comprehensive of all, is the worst of outward Evils. This is so in imagination or reality. If the first, then indeed Wise Sayings might remove it where the Man would attend unto them as that is seldom, for Covetousness and Pride on which fancied Poverty is grounded, are obstinate and will not be fully perswaded. But where it was so according to Truth; those of old were at a loss how to obtain Remedy for it, for Money is one of those hard things which require both Power and Skill to get it. Wisdom alone might shew the way, but cannot wrest it by Violence or fair Intreaty: So people were forced to sit down and Comfort themselves as well as they could, when they were necessitated to endure Inconvenience and Pain all their days, and afterwards know not what shall become of them. They were in an hard Condition to come forth once into the World to suffer Labour and Sorrow, Hunger and Thirst, Cold and Nakedness, and have no way shewed or assurance given, how or when they should be Comforted for the time wherein they had these evil things. But divine Revelation sets all this right, which relies upon the same Word and Power, and therefore it is as impossible to fail, as that the World should fall down into Rubbish. That acquaints how things stand pertaining to us Men. It gives a lively Representation of the Vanity and Transitoriness of all here; they soon pass away and are forgotten. Our own Reason and Experience confirm the truth hereof. Call to mind the days or years lately past, and reflect how they seem as to labour or sporting, to delicious, common, or course Food: Whether we ruffled in Silks, or home spun Cloth. Is it not all near the same? But we are required to look forward, for we are told of more then these little

little things. Would we go forth into the place of departed Souls, (as now we may in thought before we ſhall be there indeed) they would put in mind of other kind of things: What ſome are Happy in expectation of, and others Miſerable in diſappointment; the one would exhort to do as they did more earneſtly and Diligently. The others would warn and teſtifie leaſt we alſo paſs through here with ſo little regard of what we ought moſt to ſeek after. Not to be ſo much buſied about the Good or Evil of a Mortal Body as to neglect, but only in Subordination to ſecure the Happineſs of an Immortal part. Labour not to be rich in the World, for we can carry nothing away, but to be rich in Faith and good Works; for that conſigns over unto Salvation, and theſe follow us. Be not troubled if in Want here, for that alſo is ended; but have withal poverty of Spirit, (no Murmuring or Aſpiring Thought) and then *Yours is the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Mat.* 5. 3. which is Everlaſting, and will have no end. Why ſhould People be cumbred and make ſuch a ſtir about the things of this Life, for the Rejoycing and Vexation as to their Abundance and Want expire with the moment before us. Every revolution of the Sun, The night comes and ſhuts up all; Thoſe who did Cry or Laugh, are in deep Silence; the Laborious and Idle perſons are at Reſt; the fine Clothes are laid aſide, and ſo is the vile Raiment; the Mouth is ſtill with Sleep that fed upon Dainties or common Fare. As one day and night is to the time of our Sojourning here, ſo is the whole as to Eternity and future Life. The things we have already done would not profit unleſs we did Build further and finiſh them; ſo it will be of all Labour done as to the things here, which will have an end, and ſignifie nothing. If reaſonable Creatures would diſtinguiſh between the means and the end, Not miſtaking that for the end which is the means only. If they would diſcern the happineſs of the whole Man (which is beginning, and going on towards Conſummation) before the Conveniencies of the leſſer part which periſh with it, then they would not be ſo mightily concerned about preſent and outward things.

Let them know what is Neceſſity and Convenience, and pare away the inſatiable deſires of Luſt, Pride and Superfluity. That difference of Condition or Place (if Office and Employment do not make it) is moſt commonly a word of Pride. They are not

thence to take occasion to enlarge their desires, and murmure if not satisfied. God hath obliged himself by Covenant to give to us what we have warrant to Pray for, *viz.* our *daily Bread.* To support our Life here, but he is no where bound to gratifie the Lusts of any, to give that which is a Sin in them to desire. Whatever may be the Mutterings of a Proud and sensual Heart, it is to no more purpose to answer them, then it would be to let them have their requests; for when desire is beyond Gods Law it is endless, crying with the Horse-Leech, *Give, Give.* But to them who will be obedient, the Language of Grace saith in this Wise, *Having Food and Raiment let us therewith be content,* 1 Tim. 6. 8. Which may be justified from Nature and from Reason; for that is content with a little, and affects no delicacies. It is for plain and wholsome Food, a sutable Covering, an House to shelter from Weather and Cold. An Emblem whereof may be seen in the Feeding and Skin of Beasts; those which are more immediately for the use of Man, have a Stable or Fold, others are provided with Holes and Dens. Reason will judge of the Equity of this: It is just and right that what doth want should have supply, and if it hath convenient, What would the Man have more? The Stomach is filled, The Body is preserved against Shame, Cold and outward Violence, and hath things allotted according to its need. But it is course, Why is not the Flesh gross and filthy also? every thing applyed is more fine then what receives it. Is the Raiment mean? it is a Vile Body that is to be arrayed therewith. The excellency of Man doth not consist in these things. Let Servants have what is fit for them, and no more, least they grow Proud and Lazy. *But* Jesurun *waxed Fat and Kicked,* Deut. 32. 15. If this inferiour part be pampered too much it will grow Wanton and Luxuriant, despise the Laws of its Master, and be more unfit for his use. The Soul receives no Gratification by bodily Enjoyments, abundance of Meat and Drink hinder the Work she hath to do towards the getting of Happiness. God knows (and he intended by provision at first what we learn by experience) how much of outward Comforts is convenient for us. He prepared the Earth with the number of Inhabitants to bring forth Fruits and sufficient Encrease for the nourishment of them: But Luxury and Pride hath found out new Inventions. There is enough given for all, but

Gluttony

Gluttony and Drunkenneſs do Vainly and Sinfully waſte what others have need of. By this may be ſeen what Poverty is, It is a real Want, When they have not what is ſufficient or wholeſome to ſatisfie Hunger, nor ſutable Raiment to hide Nakedneſs and keep out Cold, this alone is Poverty: The condition of ſuch is deplorable, and ſhould be remedied. *For ye have the Poor with you always, and whenſoever you will, you may do them Good*, Mark 14. 7. They are ſuffered ſo to be for our Tryal; their Caſe is to be helped partly by themſelves, and partly by others.

But in the mean while a great deal of Diſcontent might ceaſe. There are many now in the World, ſuch as *Jude* ſpeakes of in his time, *Murmurers, Complainers, walking after their own Luſts; and their Mouth ſpeaketh great Swelling Words, Having Mens perſons in Admiration becauſe of Advantage*, Jude 16. Who have ſufficient for Life, but repine becauſe they have not enough to follow Pleaſure, to miniſter unto Boaſting and Proud things, and do court the Rich to get by them, and advance their own Eſtate. Here in a Chriſtian Countrey all profeſs to Believe the Goſpel, yet the ſame ſtrive to be as great as they can. There is little or no *condeſcending to Men of low Eſtate*, but they *mind High things* Rom. 12. 16. They ſtrive to the utmoſt of their Rank and Condition, to ſeem above or the outſide of what they are. Yea, Chriſtians (to the diſhonour of their Profeſſion) ſeek earneſtly after theſe things, and eſteem of others accordingly. Since the Grace of God hath appeared to the World, More Regard and Valuation is given to them, and Contempt where wanting, then when it was under Philoſophy and the Conduct of Mans Wiſdom, for that ſaid many things in check of this unreaſonable Cuſtom. And our Lord (*who though he was Rich, yet for our ſakes became Poor*) hath enforced it with ſtronger Arguments, as Heaven is above Earth, Eternity longer then Time. But Men now a days do not really believe or not ſeriouſly attend to them, for otherwiſe they would have the due effect. He did not therefore make Promiſes to the Poor, or ſpeak againſt the Rich becauſe he was himſelf in a low condition, for he might as well have been Born of a Queen and in a Sumptuous Palace, as of a mean Virgin in *Bethlehem the leaſt of the Princes of* Judah. The Counſels, Decrees and Propheſies of old might have been ſo fixed. But the Son of God deſpiſes

the Pomp and Glory of the World, he ſlighteth them both in Word and Practiſe. Gods Thoughts are contrary to Mans Thoughts, for he ſpeaks in Favour and Comfort of the Poor whom the World abhorreth and deſpiſeth: On the other hand terribly and to humble thoſe who now are ſo much flattered and had in admiration, the ſignificancy whereof themſelves ſhall feel who do not mind nor take due warning. The Scripture runs thus when it mentions that difference of State and Condition. And whoſoever intends to have good, muſt follow the ſteps of the Captain of our Salvation, taking him both for a Lord and Example to do and to ſpeak, yea, and to think as he did, *That we may have boldneſs in the day of Judgement, becauſe as he is, ſo are we in this World*, 1 John 4. 17. And then will not be given ſo great Reſpect and Adoration to Riches only, no fawning upon thoſe who abound therewith. *For they have not ſo learned Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 20. It comes near to a Contradiction, that the *Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhould be had with reſpect of Perſons*, for that equals and makes us Brethren in Chriſt; It was given to contemn Vanity, and is of a different nature from Gold or precious Raiment, and therefore in no wiſe to be more magnified by reaſon of thoſe worldly Advantages the Perſon is in. The Faith and good Works of thoſe in ordinary State are not taken notice of, but who have Riches and Honour of this World, what they do towards Religion is applauded even by thoſe who ſhould Know, Teach and Practice otherwiſe. Though theſe do contrary to the Apoſtolical Canon, 1 *Tim.* 5. 21. Yet, *God and the Lord Jeſus, and the Elect Angels will not prefer one before another, they will do nothing by Partiality*, but diſtribute to every Man according to his work.

Pſal. 18. 27.

Jam. 2.

It is thus alſo in a lower ſtep. We find it by Obſervation and Experience if we never ſaw it Written; *The Poor Mans Wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his Words are not heard*, Eccleſ. 9. 16. The Apology here is, Becauſe tis ſuppoſed that they who have Worldly Advantages have alſo better opportunity and means to get Wiſdom, and thoſe cannot attain it, who have them not. *Great Men are not always Wiſe*, Job 32. 9. and further Wiſdom doth not depend ſo much upon outward means, as thoſe Endowments and Faculties God hath firſt implanted in the mind. There is much upon the Improvement of them, yet this is not neceſſarily had

had or hindered by worldly Abundance or Want; for the first is often made an occasion of Sensuality, Negligence and Idleness. None judges of a Tree by its being planted in a right soil, or dunged about, or the likelihood to bear, but by what Fruit it doth actually bring forth. God may, and doth raise up some without common Advantages, whom he enlightens by his Grace and Spirit. He shews his own Glory and Power this way, and chiefly in them who had not much of outward abundance. The Prophets and Apostles, those Worthies of old both in Divine and Humane Learning, were rejected and despised by that corrupt and foolish Estimation of judging the Man without the Man, neither according to Body nor Soul, but Land or Money which he hath no right unto from his own Nature, but national Laws and Constitutions hath set out unto him. Besides, Wisdom and Truth is without the Man, and not to be judged of by him: The Blessing is sent unto the World through such water-Pipes, which of themselves are dry and meer Engines to convey. Who is so sottish to refuse the good, because of the meanness of the Instrument that brings it? *A Man can receive nothing except it be given him from Heaven*, John 3. 27. God is jealous of his own Glory, and sends forth his Treasure by despicable outward means that the Excellency thereof should not be in us, and all praise should be returned unto him None doth refuse his daily Sustenance, although it comes forth of the dirt of the Earth; the Proud person doth not esteem Silk the worse, because it is the Excrements of a Worm: Yea, all Temporal things if we look down to the Pit whence they are digged, are mean and filthy, which doth not prejudice as to them. *Every good Gift, and every perfect Gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights* James 1. 17. They no have Defilements; We are naturally unclean, but this comes on purpose to cleanse us. *Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth*, John 17. 17. It receives no advantage but diminishment from the things of this World.

One would think we were all under the Dominion of *Mammon*, he is so much in Mens Thoughts: It is a shame that Reasonable Creatures should esteem of one another according to a little Pelf or outward Gaiety, but much more that Christians (who if they were so indeed, their Profession would as much advance them above the common Size of People, as they are above Brutes

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if they preſerved their Dignity) ſhould yet be carried away with the errour and abſurd Partiality of the World. A ſign how little they are governed by Faith and Reaſon, but they are led on by Sence and Cuſtom. Which would do us moſt good, will be ſeen when the Lord of all ſhall demand how we have done according to the Laws and Power he gave unto us.

Mat. 25. 14,19.

Were thoſe falſe opinions of things taken away, as it would be a great help to our Duty, ſo to preſent Peace and Contentment: For the generality of Mankind being Slaves to the opinion of others, do more according to what they think then themſelves. Such a thing could be let alone, but the Faſhion and Majority is for it, and they muſt do as the reſt. Again, they could be without it, but Reputation and Eſteem of others make it neceſſary. Who go not according to Conſcience towards God, yet do upon the very ſame Principles towards Men, for would they do the ſame to pleaſe and get Honour from him (who is more then all the many Inhabitants of the World) as they do from one another, they were in the right. Which ſeems to ſhew that what God requires is not only eaſie, and may be performed, but there is a propenſion in the Heart of Man to do even the ſame, for he doth it in common Acts, though he doth not ſtretch up this Principle to the high and right end. Would he do ſo in Obedience unto God, as to recommend himſelf unto others; take and go according to his Eſtimation of things, (For who knows them better then he that made and eſtabliſhed them?) rather then according to the common Vogue of others, which is meer Opinion and Fancy of the multitude, not to be juſtified from Truth nor Reaſon, then he would be certainly Happy. Let not thy Actions be according to others Savings, but be ruled by the Direction of Gods Word, for this in moſt things is contrary to what is commonly received among us.

We are diſtinct and ſeveral Beings, there is a mutual need to keep up Society; yet that was intended for our Benefit and not Deſtruction; It is to get Neceſſaries and Conveniencies for the Body, to Admoniſh and Inſtruct one another; this is only to help but to make nothing, to aſſiſt and ſhew the way but not to add or implant Power: Still one Man is divided from another. God and himſelf only is to work out his own Happineſs, and 'tis not in the power of all the World beſides; ſo again if he fall away into

into Misery, they cannot absolutely prevent. He alone is sensible of the Good, and none but himself shall groan for the Evil. In this is the Saying true, God for us all, and every one for himself. What the *Israelites* told *David*, *Thou art more then Ten Thousand of us*, is really so as to the meanest Person: He is more to himself then Ten Thousand times Ten Thousand, which prompts especially to what the Prophet advises. *Deliver ye every Man his Soul from the fierce Anger of the Lord*, Jer. 51. 45. and in all other things relating to his Happiness. Our Saviour was made *of the Seed of* David *according to the Flesh*, Rom. 1. 3. *Paul* doth also Stile some *his Brethren according to the Flesh*: but there is no relation between Souls otherwise then from the common Stock, no more then between rayes of the Sun. *They shall be all Taught of God*, as Children of the same Parent: Only to talk together of the things pertaining to him, and to put one another in mind how they shall most please him. The stronger and elder should help the weak according to his different Grace. But still as their Being, so their End; as their Works, so their Reward; and also of Sin and Punishment, *Every person shall bear his own Burthen*. The way to Happiness is to live according to what is written in the Holy Book, not what is thought in the foolish and corrupt minds of Men; as they are such when in Opposition to that.

This is not so much besides the present Subject as may be first apprehended; for this would help to the prevention of Murmuring and getting of Contentment. The greater part of Mankind are in a middle State, having neither Poverty nor Riches, but Food convenient for them, And yet are not satisfied: Which proceeds from Covetousness, Sensuality, Pride, of which it hath been discourse severally. By observing the Insolent and Contemptuous Carriage of others above them, to avoid that they are discontented with what they have, and seek greater things. They are guided by the opinion of others, which hinders from finding rest, for it is in anothers power to disquiet them. Contempt doth strangely exasperate, and though a sure remedy is to despise Contempt, yet through the dominion or remainders of Pride, this is more easily said then done, which yet Grace and Truth are able to subdue and mortifie. This would be of much Advantage, for it is the greatest Sting of the lower Condition where-

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fore Men are ſo aſhamed of it, and are tempted to get higher by right or wrong: For in a mean Eſtate, *Our Soul is exceedingly filled with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe, and with the Contempt of the Proud*, Pſal. 123. 4.

Let not thy Heart envy Sinners, but be thou in the fear of God all the day long, Prov. 23. 17. Do not Sin to advance thy preſent Condition: Look not ſo much upon others but mind thine own things; to compare with thoſe above thee, will occaſion fretting and greedy deſires. Conſider thy equals, and thou art ſatisfied: Caſt thine Eye upon thoſe inferiour, and thou art thankful; Many have not ſo much, Who Labour long and Eat little, Who endure great hardſhip to live, but it is not ſo with thee: And they ſeem leſs diſcontented. They give praiſe to God, and have good will to their Benefactors for every ſmall Mercy and Kindneſs. Art thou apt to Murmure and be Unthankful, who haſt more? Thoſe poor Wretches ſhall riſe and Condemn thee, for they were contented with leſs things. Art thou better then they? Pride will dictate ſo, why, if they had the ſame Advantage for Education they would have been the ſame alſo, but even now God is more pleaſed with them, becauſe they are better ſatisfied with little then thou with more. He that made them, made thee; who placed them in the loweſt degree, might have done ſo with thee alſo. Will you Sin more, becauſe he hath dealt more Graciouſly? *Doth the Wild Aſs bray when he hath Graſs, or loweth the Ox over his Fodder*, Job 6. 5. you have ſufficient for your natural needs, Labour therewith and be contented.

It is time to come and viſit thoſe who are poor indeed, that they may ſee the way how their Condition is to be remedied. It is a ſore Evil depreſſing the mind, and making the Body ſeem yet more Vile and Sordid. *Yet now our Fleſh is as the Fleſh of our Brethren, our Children as their Children*, Neh. 5. 5. There is no need of deſcribing their Miſeries, for they are too much known and felt already. Evil is no further to be manifeſted then is neceſſary for Proviſion againſt it, as a Wound is to be Launced in order to a Cure. It is alledged, That Cuſtom, Their low Thoughts and Deſires make this Condition eaſily born, which we otherwiſe uſed think inſupportable. But a continued Evil which one is forced to ſubmit unto all his days, is ſo much the more Grievous. Indeed it is Wiſdom to have moderate deſires ſtretched no further

ther then the true worth and value of the thing. There are Objects anſwering to each Faculty in Man, he is made of periſhing Fleſh and an immortal Spirit, the one for Earthly things, the other for Heavenly; So he hath different deſires according to them, One covets after the things here, and is contented, The other thoſe above which at preſent he is only ſeeking and in expectation of, for they are to be revealed hereafter. Now the error may be two ways: if the Man lets out both after preſent and viſible things, then he is but half ſatisfied; On the contrary, it is when they are both ſtifled and confined within this World, when they are preſſed down to the Earth, and aim no further. We have Inſtances of both miſtakes in the Rich Voluptuary, and the Poor and Fooliſh perſon; the firſt runs out after Happineſs till he is tired and diſappointed; the other cannot do that through Want but he rubs through as contentedly as he can with what is before him, not thinking above, but is ignorant and unmindful as to any thing more, and ſo concludes all is well enough; for the firſt he is not to be blamed, but the latter ſinks into Deſtruction and Miſery.

Conſider ye Poor, you have ſo much Knowledge as to be willing to be Happy, then you muſt learn to *know the Way of the Lord, and the Judgement of your God*, for there are no other means of being ſo, and the neglect is Dangerous. If you will not regard this, your Condition is not likely to be mended in this World; and it will be Ten Thouſand degrees worſe in that which is to come. Here you have Comfort and Aſſurance that all your preſent Sufferings will have an end; but then another Life doth begin, and if you ſhould be Miſerable in that alſo, there will be no redreſs for Thouſand Thouſands of Years. There is no way to avoid that, but to get God for your Friend whilſt you are here, which is done by Knowledge of him and Obedience to his Commands in Scripture; unleſs you do this you will be Miſerable now, and Miſerable to all Eternity. God brought you into this World when you never thought of it, and he will raiſe you up again, both Soul and Body in another State, though you now fancy and wiſh otherwiſe. Jer. 5. 4.

Remember to ſerve the Lord your God, for his gracious Promiſes are more to your Condition. When he had left the Earth to the Sons of Men, ſome by Covetouſneſs, Oppreſſion, Violence, and Deceit did ſcramble and take more, ſo others came to

be in Want and evil Intreated. But God ſhews himſelf diſpleaſed therewith, and declares in his Word that he would take their part. *For the Oppreſſion of the Poor, for the Sighing of the Needy, now will I ariſe, (ſaith the Lord) I will ſet him in Safety from him that puffeth at him*, Pſal. 12. 5. *I know that the Lord will maintain the Cauſe of the Afflicted, and the Right of the Poor*, Pſal. 140. 12. *A Father of the Fatherleſs, a Judge of the Widows is God in his holy Habitation: Thy Congregation hath dwelt therein, thou O God haſt of thy Goodneſs prepared for the Poor*, Pſal. 68. 5, 10. What follows next from the Divinely Inſpired Pen-Man? (who was a King, and did not turn Advocate for them out of neceſſity) Something at firſt which ſeems to have no Connexion on the former, when there doth lie an hidden meaning; *The Lord gave the Word, great was the Company of thoſe that Publiſhed it*, verſe 11. In this he more eſpecially provides for them, for the way is ſhewed how they are to be relieved both by themſelves and others. He manifeſts his Power and Sovereignty that he hath commanded it to be done. As Lord over free Creatures, he would have it done by them freely. He makes known his pleaſure, and hath left to them whither they will comply with it; Now is the time of Tryal. But he will confirm all the Truth he hath ſpoken by his Prophets, Son and Apoſtles. He will Reward and Puniſh according to what is written, *Rev.* 20. 12. which is as true, as if already paſt and fulfilled.

There are Directions for the Poor, which if they follow, they may either come out of their Poverty, or have it ſanctified unto them. They are to obey God in all thoſe Commandments he hath given; and then they muſt uſe the means, particularly diligent Labour and Honeſty. They are alſo to avoid thoſe Sins of Idleneſs, Pride, Drunkenneſs, Prodigality and unneceſſary Expence which bring on Poverty. God hath eſtabliſhed things by way of ſecond Cauſes and outward Means, which are to be uſed. When theſe are ſhewed and put in our power, he that will not comply with them, it is his own fault if he is Poor, and he ſuffers juſtly under the Inconveniencies thereof. Indeed they are ſo Afflicting, that unleſs Men are ſottiſh Fools, and idle Drones, they will do any thing to be relieved. Methinks I ſee the yearning Bowels of Thouſands throughout this Nation, who are in Doubt and Diſtreſs, they fain would have a Livelihood, they look out any way, but ſee none. What Cares and Fears are about this one thing?

We

We are apt through Ignorance and Unbelief to ſeek for Help in Affliction every way rather then the right; and what we ſhould firſt, we do laſt of all when driven by the failure of all other means. Many do not *firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God and his Righteneſs*, Nor conſider who made and brought them up hitherto, Who hath fed them all their life long. This they do not diſcern nor are thankful for it, God is not in all their Thoughts. And when they come to pinch and be in ſtrait, then they uſe all ways right or wrong. And conclude falſly, that if they cannot have a maintenance by both manner of means, much leſs if they obſerved only thoſe which are lawful and good. Whereas by venturing upon evil and unjuſt things, they forfeit their right to the Promiſes, *Iſa.* 33. 15, 16. *Mat.* 6. 33. And alſo through their Knavery and Idleneſs, it comes to paſs that others will not truſt or not deal with them. Theſe judging only by common Accidents and the things before them, how it goes with others in the World who do Wickedly and yet Thrive; and therefore they are encouraged to try, and if it doth not fall out ſo with them, they Murmure at their hard Condition. Not much unlike thoſe of whom the Prophet ſpeaks, *It ſhall come to paſs when they ſhall be Hungry they ſhall fret themſelves, and curſe their King, and their God, and look upwards*, Iſa. 8. 21. Be enraged at him whoſe Laws eſtabliſh Property, for giving ſo much to one and ſo little to themſelves. And think hard of the Lord who Governs the World for ſuffering things ſo to be. But for all the Mutterings of the Ungodly, *They that know thy Name will put their Truſt in thee, for thou Lord haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee*, Pſal. 9. 10. If they would go to him in the firſt place, pray for his Direction, uſe his appointed means, and do nothing more then is right; they would not be reduced to ſo great ſtraits as many are. There may be Surmiſes and Frightnings of Poverty, which are Temptations of the Enemy to Sin and Diſtruſt, which are ſuffered for proving us; but he that reſolves for all to go on in known duty, avoiding Sin and Knavery, ſhall be provided for. As it is juſt and reaſonable that a Man ſhould Eat the Labour of his Hands, ſo it is likewiſe aſſented by all, that he who doth Eat ſhould Work for it; and they do not grudge the former to have the latter. This Principle is fixt in the minds of Men by God who made them, and ordained all things for their uſe to be had by Labour. None pities

him who neglects it, although he Wants. Even those who have to live without (if they do not make it up by other ways of doing good) derogate from this great Law and Institution. The Lazy Gentleman and Idle Beggar do vary from it; the one to his greater future account, and the other to his present Misery. But who considers of things, and hath right apprehensions, not corrupted with Pride or Sloth, is glad and thankful that things are so disposed of, and willingly reaches forth when they may be so had.

Thus it is ordered as to outward supplies, the Poor are shewed and exhorted what to do; but God to shew his abundant care of their Welfare, hath also given to others a Charge over them. As *Deut.* 15 7, 8, 9, 10. the Reason and Injunction of all is added, verse 11. *For the Poor shall never cease out of the Land: Therefore I Command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine Hand wide unto thy Brother, and to thy Poor and to thy Needy in thy Land.* Here is only a Command given, and no Compulsion, Objects are left for the tryal thereof. The Phrase is directed just contrary to the close-fisted World, *Open thine Hand wide*, but Man shuts it fast, and will not be easily moved otherwise. If the Grace and Authority of Almighty God will not do now, as he spake the World into Being, so he will at length send forth his Word, and it shall be actually recompenced for all manner of Disobedience, *For the Needy shall not be always forgotten, the expectation of the Poor shall not perish for ever.* God will make it up to them at present by inward Comfort and Contentment, and by considering their Condition hereafter, when they shall see what others suffer for now shutting up their Bowels of Compassion against them. He provided for them also after the same manner as the Earth to maintain us; *For he said let the Earth bring forth, and it was so*, Gen. 1.11. The Earth though dull heard the Word of the Lord. To Man he likewise Commands to minister to his poor Brethren expecting of him to be freely obeyed; because he can, therefore he refuses, some do, and some do not; and even the first in too scanty a measure, not according to the proportion God hath given them. The generality do not at all out of Conscience towards him, it may be something in compliance with national Laws and Customs of the World, but not out of respect had to the great King and only Lord thereof. There may be seen a Providential

Providential ordering, that Humane Conſtitutions tend only ſo far as to provide againſt the Univerſally Corrupt and Diſobedient ſtate of Mankind, but ſtill the Exerciſe and Tryal may be had for free Obedience. So here the Law of the Realm hath made a ſlender Proviſion for the Poor, and nevertheleſs room is left for the Alms of good and willing people. God doth oblige from his own Dominion, Property and Greatneſs, and alſo by Arguments taken from themſelves: Mark how pathetically the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh, *When thou ſeeſt the Naked that thou Cover him, and that thou hide not thy ſelf from thine own Fleſh*, Iſa. 58. 7. Importing that thou being the ſame altogether ſhouldſt give what thy ſelf wouldſt deſire if in the ſame need. *And if thou draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and ſatisfie the Afflicted Soul*, verſe 10. Meaſure by thy ſelf when thou art thus, let thy Soul be in his Souls ſtead, nay, to Paraphraſe doth loſe the excellency of Expreſſion, being ſuch as no Humane Orators, nothing but the immediate Inſpiration of the Spirit of God can compoſe and ſet forth. The Wiſe Men of old ſaid little or nothing as to Alms-giving unleſs by way of Generoſity and vain glorious Beneficence. They thought it did derogate from Prudence to give away his own and ſee no good come of it. Every one did hold that ſo faſt that it was not in the power of Mans Wiſdom by Argument and Perſwaſion to get it from them. So far it is true, for the Tongues of Men and Angels that can move people to every thing beſides, yet it is not ſufficient that they might part with beloved Mammon, though for ſupport of their Poor Neighbour. Nothing but the Revelation of God can do as to this; *for that where believed, muſt perſwade Men.* Theſe have the like reaſon to do it as others through Unbelief to refrain, for they are not willing to part with a certainty for an uncertainty, the Money they have in their Hands, but if given away, it is none of their own, and they are not aſſured of finding any good thereof. But who have Faith will not call that uncertain, which God hath promiſed. *Sell that ye have, and give Alms, provide your ſelves Bags which wax not old, a Treaſure in the Heavens that faileth not*, Luke 12. 33. Seeing you are Mortal and muſt be taken away from your Riches and Poſſeſſions, Is it not a better and a more Wiſe way ſo to diſpoſe, that they may ſtand the owners in ſome ſtead? for it is certain and evident that to keep after the manner of worldly Men, would avail nothing

thing at all. Whatever is ſpent in Pride or Pleaſure, in Prodigality or Vain things, is conſumed at the inſtant, there is an end, and no more; but what is given, that remains a Sacrifice well Pleaſing unto God. *He that giveth to the Poor lendeth to the Lord, and that which he giveth will he pay him again*, Prov. 19. 17. *Foraſmuch as ye have done it unto the leaſt of my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*, Mat. 25. 40. *He which ſoweth ſparingly ſhall reap alſo ſparingly, and he that Soweth bountifully ſhall reap alſo bountifully*, 2 Cor. 9. 6. There is no need of citing more Texts, but for people to be put in mind and ſtirred up to comply therewith. What hinders? If ye believe in God, ye muſt believe what he hath here ſpoken by his Son and Servants. And this doth not depend upon an evil Heart of Unbelief or Fancy to the contrary, but known to God are all his Decrees according to which he will deal with all Mankind at laſt. Either Stupidity or want of Faith doth not alter the Caſe: And ſince theſe things are ſo, The rich of this World have the ſame Exhortation to be *ready to Diſtribute, willing to Communicate*, as now for doing as they do either by ſordidly keeping, or expending it in the Faſhion and Senſuality; for they may judge which is likely to turn to moſt Good and Benefit to themſelves at long run. They may as well ſend forth Benevolence to reap thereof in the Kingdom of Heaven, as now the Husband-Man ſoweth Seed in order to Harveſt, though for the preſent it ſeems loſt and buried in the ground.

Do not ſhift it off from your ſelves to Clergy-Men, who have Church Performents, and live by Religion, and therefore are to give more freely. Admitting that, yet in this you argue againſt your ſelves, are Enemies to your own Glory and Recompence. There is much talk they ſhould do this or that, but there is no difference in the Commandments of God to one more then the other. All are equally preſſed to the obſervance of them, there is nothing more ſtrictly enjoyned nor greater Duty laid on the Prieſt then the People, ſaving what relates to the diſtinguiſhing Office; and Alms-giving is not particularly mentioned under that. All are the Creatures and Servants of the ſame God, and owe the like Subjection unto him. What if it ſhould be ſaid? You likewiſe live by Religion, for He unto whom it all relates, holds your Souls in Life; he placed you under ſuch Parents from whom your Inheritance deſcended, or gave you power to get Wealth; but beſides,

beſides, you ow your keeping of abundance to this only; for here is founded *Meum* and *Tuum*, the diſtinction of Right and Wrong, Take away the ſence of this, all Confuſion would come in; Thoſe in Diſtreſs and deep Poverty might uſe Rapine and Fraud, and they could be no loſers if the utmoſt was to be ſent out of this Troubleſome and Miſerable World; *But the Wrath of God which is revealed here againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men*, which is to be Executed in another place, keeps things in order. It is your Intereſt to be Religious towards God as well as Loyal to the King, for he eſtabliſheth Kingdoms and property. He made Man upright, and when thoſe Principles of evil came in afterwards, did ſend forth his *Mercy* and *Truth* without which *our Souls would be among Lyons*. The Proud and Scornful Men ſhould have a care how they ſpeak Contemptibly of his Inſtitution. What the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 9. 13, 14. may ſilence them; and the ſame God hath ordained that, who maintains all the Order and Diverſity which is in the World.

Whatſoever is more then the Neceſſity and Conveniencies of each Family belongeth to the Poor and is their due. It appears from *Eph.* 4. 28. that thoſe in ordinary Employments are to diſpoſe of what is more then ſatisfieth themſelves, ſo there is the ſame reaſon that thoſe higher ſhould likewiſe proportionably, juſt keep up the diſtinction, but otherwiſe come as near equality as may be; for thoſe under us would as willingly have ſome Comforts of Life as our ſelves. They are likewiſe Brethren of the ſame common ſtock, the very ſame in Body and Soul, partakers of the ſame Grace, and Heirs of the ſame Hope. Neither is there ſo great ſtreſs to be laid on this Duty, for it is juſtice and not Merit, called *Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. 37. 25. Pſal. 112. 9. Dan. 4. 27. a giving that which is due and equal. Nor ſhould they be Proud that do ſomething towards it, but thank God who enabled them; for it is Duty. Themſelves ſhould acknowledge Gods goodneſs that they are in ſuch a Condition as to give Alms and not receive them: Thoſe rather are to be commended (if any praiſe is due for what is Obedience) who are partakers, in cheerfully bearing their Condition. Indeed unleſs the Scripture did ſpeak expreſly of a future Reward, as it doth to this more particularly then any other Duty, (whether fore-ſeeing Mens backwardneſs and to give greater encouragement, or to ſatisfie this doubt) One that did examine

mine the reaſon of things would ſcarce think thereof, becauſe they have the more already in hand to do it, and a Steward that hath Money given him to lay out ſo much for his Maſters uſe, the reſt for his own, expects no more. But God to ſhew his extraordinary Goodneſs, and to make us more ready to ſupply the want of his poor Creatures, hath already committed wherewithal by giving a more plentiful uſe, and alſo a promiſe of ſomething more to come. Some Primitive Writers have ſpoken too Hyperbolically concerning Alms, Others turn them to merit of forgiveneſs of Sin. But herein they do exceed, for ſo much is not to be depended thereon. Alms do not make Atonement for Sin. Though ſome may be found who would give as largely as he in *Micah* for the Sin of his Soul, yet it will not do unleſs it be repented of and forſaken. It is not come to that for the Rich to have a Licence to Sin, or the Poor to miſs of Forgiveneſs for want of Money. Neither is it ſuch an extraordinary good Work above all others, for things are to be ſtated aright: It being a Temporal kindneſs to the worſe part, for all which they go away and die, and it is not much minded: ſo it is not to be compared to the good done to Souls, for this ever remains. The other is more then what is ſaid, *To keep Life only to longer Miſery*, for that is a poor Relief. The Chriſtian Charity doth, or ſhould go further, even to have not only bare Neceſſities but Refreſhments of Life alſo, for we could not be ſo contented, and they are likewiſe deſirous of more, The great Law, *Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf* dictates thus much.

Thus we ſee how it ſtandeth with our Brethren, how God hath provided for them in his Grace and Revelation, he doth his part, but we do not ours. As the Apoſtle argues, *Jam.* 2. 15, 16. It is the ſame a little higher. We pray to God for them, that he would Relieve thoſe Afflicted in Mind, Body and Eſtate; and perhaps think hardly becauſe they are not; when he hath ſet out the means and left it in our power; for if we would do as he hath ſaid and commanded in Scripture, all thoſe ſeveral Afflictions would be actually Relieved. They would be Comforted and ſupported in the mean time, till God gives an happy Iſſue and Deliverance out of them, which he will certainly do if we prepare and become worthy getting the Qualification he there ſhews.

This

This might be known by his Goodneſs and Truth already, let any one fulfil the terms of the Covenant of ſincere and univerſal Obedience, *Turn from every evil way*; for the want of that is the only hindrance to Loving of God with all the Soul, and all the Mind. One Sin is the *Root that beareth Gall and Wormwood*, and hinders all theſe good effects. But whoſo keeps himſelf from that, let him ſeek after Knowledge, for to that he is Commanded: Then come and ſee how it is Written. When the Law of God is in his inward parts, when The Kingdom of God both in Word and Power is within him, there is a Remedy for all manner of Adverſities by comfortable Thoughts to the Soul. What things may be known without, there is no need of particular mention in Scripture. When that Reaſon God hath given prompts to outward means, this ſhews the lawfulneſs of them; for Eaſe and Deliverance may be ſought for the Body, as Comfort and Freedom to the Soul. And further it is excellently conſulted as to the Afflictions of Eſtate. O ye Sons and Daughters of Sorrow, be fully aſſured that God is Good ſtill. *All the Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth unto ſuch as keep his Covenant and Teſtimonies*, Pſal. 25. 10. Think of Almighty God by his Works and his Word, and from the good and uſefulneſs of things pertaining to us. Let us know our ſelves, remembring we are but Men and imperfect Creatures. Call to mind how Evil came into the World through Sin, though it is not taken away, yet Help is ordained againſt it. It is Written and found true of the Benefits of the ſecond *Adam*, unto whom all the Scripture hath Relation. *Surely he hath born our Griefs and carryed our Sorrows*, Iſa. 53. 4. It is but reaſonable we ſhould have ſome ſence of them alſo; That as he had Compaſſion on the Afflicted, ſo we ſhould perceive how great things he endured for us, to raiſe our Love, Thankfulneſs and Obedience unto God through him. *Take, my Brethren, the Prophets who have ſpoken in the Name of the Lord, for an Example of ſuffering Affliction and of Patience. Behold we count them Happy which endure. Ye have heard of the Patience of* Job, *and have ſeen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very Pitiful and of tender Mercy*, James 5. 10, 11.

Concluſion of the Chapter.

Heb. 2. 10.

CHAP. XIX.

AN EXHORTATION TO OBEDIENCE and FEAR of God; The CONCLUSION of the Whole.

NOw therefore ſtand ſtill, that I may Reaſon with you before the Lord of all the Righteous Acts of the Lord, 1 Sam. 12.7. It is as certain that God is, as any thing is, for he made all things. Conſider how great he muſt be, whoſe Works are ſo, how Glorious, Good and Excellent he is, as thoſe Manifeſtations do ſet forth. And then think further, how we the Inhabitants of the Earth (who walk up and down as ſo many *Graſhoppers*) ſhould behave our ſelves towards him If we were not his Offspring and Workmanſhip, we might juſtly think he would have nothing to do with us, but that ſhews the contrary; nay, moreover our Rebellion proves the Relation. What might be known by Obedience, is alſo ſhewed by Tranſgreſſion. But how unreaſonable doth this laſt appear? for reflect upon God and our ſelves; What are we to deſpiſe, or be ſtubborn againſt him? He is great and we little; Other things do his Will, and why ſhould not we comply therewith? Would the vain Swearer walk out, and as he beholds the Heaven or Earth he treads, which was firſt Created and now ſuſtained by an Almighty power; And is it fit he ſhould be ſpoken lightly of? His Glorious and Fearful Name be uſed upon every frivolous and idle account, when he hath ſo expreſly Commanded to the contrary. So it may be ſaid of every Sin; May not the God who formed us, preſerveth us, giving whatever we enjoy, give alſo Laws and Directions to his Creature for him to be governed by?

To

To keep the Commandments of the Lord and his Statutes, which I Command thee this day for thy Good, Deut. 10. 13. *Thy Teſtimonies that thou haſt Commanded are Righteous and very Faithful*, Pſal. 119. 138. *As for God, his Way is Perfect: the Word of the Lord is tryed*, Pſal. 18. 30.

Look impartially upon his whole Revelation in Scripture, ſurvey every particular Precept, and Judge, Whether it is not equal for God to enjoyn, and for Man to comply therewith. As for Worſhip, Praiſe and Prayer, none denies them: There is the general Conſent that ſuch are to be rendred. We are zealous and prone, But here Satan the Enemy hath two Wiles, the one in ſome Ungodly people who are frightned with a little Dulneſs and Irkſomeneſs at firſt, but even they unleſs very Ignorant and Stupid cannot ſatisfie themſelves without ſome Worſhip: That Aukwardneſs would go off, if they would accuſtom themſelves to Duty. Another Subtlety, The Adverſary hath found concerning the manner thereof, for the Subſtance is agreed by the far greater part of Mankind. But here they are fierce and hot, ſo angry and diſpleaſed at contrary Opinions, So ſtiff for their own, an Evidence of what is in our nature to have to do with Religion. Here again creeps in another Device of the old Serpent by which he takes advantage, for he would confine the whole of Religion to this which is but a part: and alſo raiſes a Duſt about outward Circumſtances which are not eſſential to Worſhip, for ſeeing that *God is to be Worſhipped in Spirit and in Truth*, but hath preſcribed no exact Pattern thereof in Scripture, a way might be found out for Union, Love and Peace; Neither in the mean while ſhould we be angry with our Brother that doth not go according to the ſame preciſe manner, for as the Apoſtle ſaith, *1 Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6. Why may it not be likewiſe ſuppoſed? If there be now ſome Diverſity of Worſhip, yet as long as it is the ſame God to whom it all relates; if each way is Spiritual and True, free from Idolatry, *Jewiſh* and *Heathen* Superſtition, God is Glorified every way, for all fall down and Worſhip him, and God is in them of a Truth. He doth actually manifeſt his Favour, Grace and Acceptation to thoſe of the ſeveral Perſwaſions among us. Pſal. 119. 128.

Yea, all the Idolatries in the World do ſomewhat diſcover that natural Inclination in Man to Worſhip God, for all Falſhood and Fiction doth ſuppoſe ſomewhat true and real. But it hath been the Stratagem of the Devil (who is permitted to reſiſt) either to take away, or where he cannot do that, to corrupt: To move

Men to forget God, or deceive them in their Duty towards him. As reasonable Creatures, They can thus conceive, That if they should lose the sence of him, or harden themselves against his Fear, yet still he remaineth. *The Lord sitteth King for ever*, Psal. 29. 10. He is always above. *Thou compassest my Path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways*, Psal. 139. 3. Though we do not think of him. The Scripture in sundry places threatens severely against *forgetfulness of him*, for it casts off his Kingdom which is over the Hearts of Men. Besides it is unnatural to *forget God that formed us*. Every thing we see are his Works, which do remind; His Word, His Servants, Every Affliction or Evil, and a Thousand things do stir up our Remembrance of him, which before was stifled with other things. The sence of him is naturally imprinted in our minds, and appears forth when Stupefactions and Hindrances are taken away. Corrupt Man is willing to lose it, for it Occasions awe and dread, which he doth not like. But God would have it retained, and therefore forbids Excess, Sensuality, and all things which clog and suppress it. He doth require us to walk *Humbly with our God*, Mic. 6. 8. He hath established Love to be mixed with Fear, both make up Reverence and Good will; So we may *be in the Fear of God all the day long* without Torment, yea, with Satisfaction and Complacency.

Another Reason of our willingness to forget is because a continual Remembrance implies Subjection, and we are inclinable to that which was our Fore-fathers Fall. But why should we not think our selves (as we are indeed) Creatures? We are only in subjection to the *Most High*, We are not put under *Principalities* and *Powers*. The more excellent created Beings do not exercise Dominion over us, We are subject to none but God and Superiours on Earth of our own likeness, by his appointment in some few and outward things. Subjection sounds harsh to the Ignorant, but it is in order to Advancement, for we shall be made higher though by this way only. And we must fully Learn and Practice it, for it is to be retained in Heaven. That *lifting up* above themselves was the unhinging of those once Glorious Spirits. Whilst they would be like the Most High and Independent, the Foundation was taken away whereon they should subsist, *They kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation*, Jud 5. Whatever these now whisper to us, Whatever Pride may dictate,

yet

yet Subjection is the Language of our true nature; for this prompts thereto. By what we readily do to our Superiours on Earth, finding fault when others do not, That zeal for and observance of the Commandments of Men, doth import it is likewise just and reasonable to Obey those of God. *The Words of* Jonadab *the Son of* Rechab, the Laws of ones Countrey, yea, those lesser Institutions pertaining to Religion are observed: The Scholars of *Pythagoras* keep his Rules, a Son honoureth his Father, a Servant doth what his Master bids him, that willingness to please, the general Approbation of old Prescriptions, the Reverence for the way of our Fathers, nay, following the Fashion and Custom; If all these were lifted up from Earth unto Heaven, they teach Obedience and Subjection unto God. The fault is, we give it to every thing besides him to whom it is originally due. Why may we not do what God Commands, as well as what others say? That out of a willing Mind and perfect Freedom, then what we do in contradiction to our own Understanding, in compliance with others, and absolute Slavery.

A pretence is of more variety and self-Command, whereas if we strictly consider there is not so very great in Mens Actions. God hath given them liberty to Good and Evil, but yet hath determined the bounds of them. If they will keep his Precepts they walk at liberty and have as several kinds of Action as they can possibly have in following the dictates of Evil; for indeed the Thoughts and Imaginations of the wicked are *Evil continually*, yea, and infinitely, yet they are restrained to a short time and some few infirm Acts. Though the Circumstances and Aggravations may be more, yet they are not very many neither. *Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy Proud Waves be stayed*, Job 38. 11. An Argument of Gods Dominion even over the most Rebellious, with their utmost striving they cannot exalt themselves further. Neither is there so much Range for them, they may and do weary themselves, but then it is by going round or over the same ground again. There is more variety and a continual Advancement higher in following the things that good are, but in evil they run backwards and forwards, or whirl up and down till they sink into the bottomless Pit. Seeing there is a limited course of Action set, how much better had they submit and go according to Gods direction in Scripture, then follow their

their own or other Mens Humour, or the Temptations of Satan, for these are Rules and Confinements. Man is a finite Being, and he had better follow the guidance of the Lord, for he gives him Liberty enough, keeping him from error and those things which would hurt. *I will Instruct and Teach thee in the way in which thou shalt go*, Psal. 32. 8. Otherwise he is as the *Horse* and *Mule* following after *Beastly* and *unnatural* things, *Whose Mouth must be held in with Bit and Bridle*; so curbed that though he would act more, yet he cannot. This is the great Controvercy between God and the World concerning Liberty and Government over their own Actions. There is a definite number of the ; His Word and Commandment do extend unto, and shew forth explicitly or implicity all that are good; the Evil are in the Thoughts and Imaginations of Men. Known unto God are all of them, but herein he will display his Glory and Power, his Goodness and justice, that if People will not do according to what he saith, nor yield Subjection unto him for their Good; they do to something else, they are Servants of Sin and Evil. God hath command over Evil that it cannot the least hurt or impair his Glory, and how far that may reach, it is only by his sufferance, but the power of Mens acting is yet shorter. So whatever be their Hatred, Enmity or Opposition against him, still he hath power over them. They act according to a limited Form, though they think otherwise; and if they are not willingly subject unto him near, yet they are further of by force, but they know not, nor consider it. His Kingdom, Power and Dominion is over all, and there can be nothing Disobedient unto him. If Satan is let loose, he was tyed up first and can be again, however at the very time he cannot go further then divine Permission. Though perhaps he perceives it not, there is a Hook in his Jaws, and he may be turned back by the way he came. All things in the World are subject unto God; also our selves are, and must be whether we will or not, with this difference; if we willingly subject our selves unto him, God accepts thereof and will give a Reward; but if we Sin, we are still subject to our present and future Misery. All people will grant subjection unto God in the general as most due and reasonable; but that is not sufficient unless our Thoughts, Words and Actions are at all times Obedient and Conformable to his revealed Will.

All

All are ſenſible of the neceſſity of Religion, but the greater part take up with wrong Apprehenſions, and every thing beſides the right: They would think to pleaſe God any other way, then by keeping his Commandments. It is to be admired that Mankind (who are endued with ſuch rational and wiſe Principles as to inferiour Objects which they uſe accordingly, for they are wiſe enough in their Generation) yet ſhould be ſo miſtaken and ſottiſh, as they have been towards the Higher end. Our ſhape, beſides inward powers, do manifeſt that we were deſigned to look up to Heaven, as well as run too and fro upon the Earth. Our Nature hath a ſtrong tendency to the Author thereof, a Thirſt after that Inviſible God who made us and all things. Yet Man fell away ſoon after he was Created, and became Blind, Strange and Miſerably deceived. The ſubſtance of Religion was not loſt, but ſpoiled and wholly turned into Falſhood and Error. If we run over the Hiſtory thereof from *Adam* unto *Noah*, and from *Noah* unto *Abraham* and the *Patriarkes*; the Fear and true Worſhip of God was but in a few ſingle Familes when the whole Earth beſides was Ungodly and Idolatrous. Afterwards it gathered into the *Jewiſh* Nation, (which alſo was very Corrupt) but that was a ſmall piece of Land to the other Habitable World. The Nations round about did laugh at them; They had Learning and Wiſdom, and ſome dwelt in every Nation under Heaven, yet there is little notice or mention made of them in other Writers. In the Treatiſes of Idolatry and Superſtition whilſt knowing Men could confute the Folly and Falſhood of that, they could diſprove that, but yet not light upon the true Wiſdom. Many things might be ſhewn from the Succeſſion of time to diſcover that Sulneſs, Averſeneſs, Ignorance and Pride in the Heart of Man towards God; for many would not confeſs whom they muſt know, ſome would not mind at all, others *Groped for the Wall like the Blind*, Iſa. 59. 10. Others through their own ſelf-Conceit and Knowledge which *perverted them*, would not ſtand beholden to Gods Grace and Revelation, but try to ſeek it out themſelves. The Reaſons hereof may be conceived, Mans Corruption who became weak and unable, Satans Temptation who did befool him, and alſo the excellency and wonderfulneſs of right Religion. It is exceeding Holy and Spiritual, ſo that Man could never attain unto the Knowledge thereof but by Gods help. And he would not ſeek

Pſal. 105. 12.

ſeek firſt after that, and therefore deſervedly received the error of his ways. *The Light ſhineth in Darkneſs, and the Darkneſs comprehendeth it not*, John 1. 5. It is afraid and ſhrinks thereat. We can look on this ſide, or that ſide, but not againſt the Sun ſhining in its brightneſs. It is on high, we muſt ſoar often and make many eſſayes before we can aſcend up, when there are ſo many things to preſs down.

Acts 3.17. 18. But the principal Reaſon of the ſlow progreſs of Religion is *that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.* It is a great Work whereby God is to be Glorified as to the Earth and all the Inhabitants thereof. *The Kingdom of God is like to a grain of Muſtard Seed, which a Man took and Sowed in his Field. Which indeed is the leaſt of all Seeds: but when it is grown it is the greateſt among Herbs, and becometh a Tree, ſo that the Birds of the Air come and Lodge in the Branches thereof*, Mat. 13. 31, 32. Gods doings are not of a ſudden. *Shall the Earth be made to bring forth in one day?* Iſa. 66. 8. The Fruits are growing up at full and periſh by ſlow degrees within the Circumference of the Year; So it is with Beaſts and Man, they increaſe and decreaſe by little degrees, which are not perceived in the middle time, though it is afterwards. *The Earth ſhall wax old like a Garment, and they that dwell therein ſhall die in like manner; but my Salvation ſhall be for ever, and my Righteouſneſs ſhall not be aboliſhed*, Iſa. 51. 6. This is the Tree of near Six Thouſand Years growth, that was Planted in the Earth, and came up by little according as the tenour of divine Revelation came into the World: And though that is finiſhed more then Sixteen Hundred Years ſince, yet it *hath been*, and is yet again to be Preached to the whole World: And it is *expected* what Fruit it will yet bring forth. Whether it will at length be *univerſally received*, as it hath been heretofore *rejected*. It will *ſpread yet further*, and be more eminent in the Lives of Men. The *hidden Wiſdom of God* will come forth, and he will unfold the myſtery of the Kingdom. *For he will finiſh the Work and cut it ſhort in Righteouſneſs, becauſe a ſhort Work will the Lord make upon the Earth*, Rom. 9. 28. *For I would Brethren, that ye ſhould not be Ignorant of this Myſtery, (leſt ye ſhould be wiſe in your own conceits) that blindneſs in part is happened unto* Iſrael *until the fulneſs of the* Gentiles *be come in. And ſo all* Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved, as it is written, There ſhall come out of* Sion *the Deliverer, and ſhall turn away Ungodlineſs from*

Col. 1.23. Heb. 10. 13, 16.

Iſa. 60. Pſal. 80.

from Jacob, Rom. 11. 25, 26. He is already come who gave the Word and ſhewed the Way, who made invitation for all; yet by what he hath done for us, and the continuance of the Spirit which is to abide for ever, and *Searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 10. More heavenly Truths may be yet known which are brought forth out of the Treaſure of his Word, that People may more know, and be added unto him. As certain as the Earth is ſufficient to maintain all its Inhabitants by the Tillage, Induſtry and Improvement of Man, and *God bleſſeth them in their Endeavours*, for they do it accordingly; So in his Kingdom of Grace the means are ſufficient that every Soul may come unto Glory, if they were as carefully uſed, faithfully put forth by humble Prayer and Diligence, by labouring with the Faculties of the Mind, as it is done the other way by members of the Body, the like Food may be had to nouriſh all people up to Eternal Life. If they hold faſt to the *Form of ſound Words* in Scripture, and urge it with that Authority and Reaſoning which flows from it, things will be yet better then now they are. The Word which is thought *fooliſhneſs, is wiſer then Men*; and *the weakneſs of God is ſtronger then Men.* If it is not ſtronger then they, Why are they afraid to encounter with it? Why do they turn their Backs and flee from it? What means that neglect and wilful Ignorance? They muſt be unmindful, or otherwiſe they cannot go on in ſinning. They cannot otherwiſe avoid going to the *Pleaſant Land*, then becauſe they will not hear a true report thereof, and the encouragements to it. Not all the Ungodly and Wicked of the World can withſtand thoſe Arguments in Scripture againſt them. That this is not a vain and forward Aſſertion, it may be ſomewhat judged from theſe four enſuing. Pſal. 67. Iſa. 61. 11.

1. From Conſideration of Wildom and Folly.
2. The intrinſick Goodneſs of the things commanded, and the Evil of what is forbidden.
3. The Promiſe of Eternal Life.
4. The Threatning of Eternal Death.

The firſt prepares the way, for the Man is capable of receiving Good, and ſubject unto Evil: He hath a natural deſire to one, and abhorrence of the other: So He is prompted to look about and order his Actions accordingly. He is told how things ſtand; Wiſdom moves him to ſearch and examine, it being a more important Queſtion for him to know, then his Title to

his Estate or which way to get a Livelihood; because these things are greater, longer and will as certainly be upon him, as the little, short and fading Conveniencies are now, *for he must die*. And then do appear forth the things contained in Scripture, all one as the things we now see, handle and converse withal. Inconsideration is the utmost Folly and Danger, for we know that temporal Evils are the more grievous when they fall on us through our want of Care and Fore-sight, much more must it be to Eternal, for they are without end and remedy. The Word is laid before
Ezek. 2. 5. 7. Mankind, They must either *hear or forbear*; if the first, they are Wise, and will come to Faith and Knowledge; if they forbear, they are the most sottish Fools that can be, for they certainly plunge themselves into all those Evils, whereas the other way they might have avoided them. The best dictates of Wisdom make the Man enquire about these things because they so nearly concern him, his own self, *His own Eternal Happiness or Misery*, and finding it so, he must prepare accordingly. Then he comes to consider what he is to do, and avoid that he may be Happy and safe as to this most necessary thing, which leads to the second point.

2. This hath great influence over Mens Actions, because it is present. They are all done out of consideration of Happiness or Misery; to have the one, and eschew the other, is the desire of Good and Bad, Righteous and Wicked. Each Man acts upon such a number of *Thoughts within himself* concerning the one or the other. The Question is concerning Good and Evil, Duty or Sin which tends most unto Happiness, and to avoid Misery; which hath been debated all along particularly in the more considerable instances. It is certain, on the one hand there is a real Good in whatever God commands; it is agreeable unto and preserves our nature, hath an increase and expectation of better things to come. On the other side, What is forbidden is only a vain appearance of Happiness, It hurts and comes near to Destroy, It raises Doubt and Misery all the Life long, and Dread of worse things hereafter. They do vanish in the Act, and manifestly come to nothing: *The pleasures of Sin* can never make a Man Happy, because they are unsatisfactory at the very time: they are *for a season*, which is short, and all one as if it had never been. There is no hope of any thing more, but fearful Expectation. Here is *the great searching of Heart*, for Man hath a good-

will

will towards God, but a jealouſy as to this one thing. He hath a Zeal and Inclination for his Worſhip, for that by uſe may become familiar unto him, and hinders of nothing: And therefore ſhews himſelf willing to every part thereof; So for Godlineſs there is no ſuch Diſpute, he is quickly brought over to that. If he hath ſufficient to live handſomely in the World, he aſſents unto as reaſonable and fit to be practiſed all the rules of Righteouſneſs; this is of good report and accepted in the World, unleſs ſome miſtruſts of a Livelihood and coming to Want, of which hath been heretofore ſpoken. However this is granted by all to Chap. 14. conduce towards the welfare of the Community and ſingle Perſons. But the great Suſpicion and Conteſt is about the *denial of worldly Luſts, and living ſoberly in this World*: Here is imagined an hindrance of Happineſs. This hath been likewiſe endeavoured to be cleared, and the nature of things ſtated, that Man might be ſatisfied as to this. Were he alike perſwaded that theſe do not obſtruct his Happineſs, no more then acts of Piety and Juſtice, he would equally approve and follow them. Nay, they promote it as hath been ſhewed. The equity of Gods ways may be ſeen towards us, for they are juſtified of all thoſe who walk therein, and thoſe who do not, excuſe themſelves. Wickedneſs is condemned of her ſelf; even thoſe who practice one kind condemn another whereof they are not ſo Guilty. The Worſhipper of God, who lives in Injuſtice and Sin, will ſpeak againſt the Ungodly; the Covetous and Unrighteous will exclaim againſt the Intemperate and Unclean Perſon; as again he will to the Hypocrite and Knave. Even Sinners know, but they are enſlaved to wicked Deſires and Luſt, that it would be better to live without them. Man doth earneſtly deſire Happineſs, and ſeek after it in every thing beſides the right, in every place but where it is only to be found. Let any one make a Propoſal of Good, he hearkens and thankfully accepts thereof. But if put in mind of Religion, then there is ſuch a clutter and ſtir about that, he knows enough already. The Prophet ſpeaks to our time, and exactly to the preſent purpoſe; *For Precept muſt be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line, Line upon Line, here a little and there a little This is the Reſt wherewith ye may cauſe the weary to Reſt, and this is the Refreſhing, yet they would not hear*, Iſa. 28. 10, 12. It is not a *vain thing* you are perſwaded unto, *It is your Wiſdom, It is your Happineſs, It is your Life*, there is no need to exhort to that.

If ſome inviſible Enemy did not beat off, and 'tis your own fault to give way to him, for you may reſiſt him if you will, it is impoſſible you ſhould keep ſo at a diſtance, or refrain from what carries ſuch Evidence and Demonſtration of Good. If the ſame did not tempt and puſh on, (and you might abſtain if you would) you could never be ſo eager after the Wages of Sin and Death, to the committing of thoſe things wherein is no Benefit, the moſt
Pſal. 119. that can be ſaid for it is a ſlight Convenience, which inſtantly
119. paſſeth away and ſatisfieth not, it is but *droſs*.

Thoſe who now ſtand in defence of the Goſpel are at ſome
Jer 44.17, diſadvantage by reaſon of long cuſtom in Sin and Iniquity, Men
18, 19. are for doing what *their Fathers have done before them*, But that again is taken away, becauſe there is ſo much the more experience to witneſs unto the truth of what we ſpeak. It is the property of Wiſdom to know that before hand which Fools know ſenſibly upon themſelves. There hath been ſome Thouſand Years experience of the Miſery and Deceitfulneſs of Sin, and innumerable Examples upon a Death-Bed ſincerely wiſhing that they had lived otherwiſe, Theſe give ſufficient warning to thoſe few who now live, who will go away in like manner, and alſo to ſucceeding Ages. That *Iniquity ſhould ſtill abound*, is one of the *depths of Satan*. But we have encouragement by the Promiſes of God, that the World will be better Reformed before the abſolute end thereof. *O Lord my Strength, and my Fortreſs, and my Refuge in the day of Affliction; The* Gentiles *ſhall come unto thee from the ends of the Earth, and ſhall ſay, ſurely our Fathers have inherited Lies, Vanity, and things wherein there is no profit*, Jer. 16. 19. Part of which hath been already fulfilled as to the aboliſhment of Idolatry and falſe Worſhip; and alſo that great Corruption of the *Roman Church* (whereby Chriſtianity is now Blaſphemed throughout the whole World) will be yet taken away. The other part hath in ſome meaſure,
Rom. 2. 23 and will be yet found true more univerſally by the actions and
Deut. 32. manners of Men, for *God is diſhonoured* by them, and they find no
21. good therein: They ſhall confeſs and perceive that their An-
Tit. 3. 3. ceſtors were miſtaken as to the great Concernment of all, Obedience to God and their own Happineſs. If they would ſearch and try by the utmoſt Reaſon and Diſcourſe, look back upon the Generations before, Is that an Argument they ſhould be Miſerable and Fooliſh, becauſe thoſe of old time were ſo? What is all their Sin and Noiſe come unto? like a Dream of a night Viſion,

ſion, out of which they will awake to a ſad account. It is commonly ſaid, We ſhould be Wiſer, which we cannot unleſs we are better, and give more diligent obſervance unto Gods Commandments, for they are good and true both by Speculation and Practiſe, As curſed are thoſe that err from them. All Sin is ſo grievous and deceitful, that the leſs one knows thereof, ſo much the better. What the leaſt ſincere and durable Happineſs did it ever bring forth unto Men? What Evil and Miſery was there ever, which this was not the occaſion of? The Word of God gives aſſurance of Happineſs when that is a pretence only, the firſt keeps off Miſery and Hurt, which this ſubtilly brings on. That gives demonſtration of Good in the end, this hath conſequent nothing at all, which it falſly makes a ſhew of, or what is worſe certain and remedileſs Miſery, which it cunningly conceals. The Captain of our Salvation is able through his Word to overcome the evil One; his Grace is ſtronger then the others Temptation as to the preſent time; but further is that which gives a compleat Victory, Let us call in the Powers of the World to come.

The Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope did, by which we draw near to God. That could not accompliſh the effectual Reformation of Men by temporal Promiſes and Threatnings; for the firſt did happen alike to all, and then if had, they colud not make a Man truly Happy, for the greateſt Proſperity and ſenſual Enjoyments would ſooner weary, then ſatisfie the Partakers. And the like were the Threatnings, for they did involve all without difference. The *Sword* or *Death* was no ſuch frightning to thoſe who were tired of this Life through long Eaſe and Plenty: Nor was it to more conſidering perſons to have their *Carkaſes unburied*, for they ſhould not in the leaſt feel that. The *Iſraelites* did ſee thoſe mighty works and wonders God wrought for them in *Egypt*, the *red Sea* and the *Wilderneſs*. He revealed himſelf in a viſible manner on Mount *Sinai*, and afterwards by *Urim* and *Thummim*, The Fire from Heaven which conſumed the Sacrifice, the appearance of Glory over the Mercy Seat, And then he manifeſted himſelf by Viſions and Prophets. So they had a moſt ſenſible Evidence of Gods Dominion and Government over them, which ſhould keep in ſubjection. So their Diſobedience was inexcuſable, and deſerving of Puniſhment according to the Majeſty and Greatneſs of him againſt whom they offended. *The Law was our School-Maſter to bring us to Chriſt*; It did lead

lead on by Rudiments from Carnal and Temporal things, to Spiritual and Eternal; from Worldly prosperity and the conveniencies of one part, they might arise unto the true Happiness of the whole Man. Under the Gospel the Promises are such as to make him perfectly and universally Happy, and the Threatnings alike Miserable.

It is evident, there is Light and Darkness; there is also somewhat beyond these moveable Regions, where is Eternity. And this being the place of Tryal between both here is a little scanthing of Good and Evil, what doth delight and what doth torment: This we taste and feel. How we are concerned further, we may know by our Hopes and Fears. We are day by day in our single persons removed hence, and there is a desire to have a Being above, and Horror of falling below. We have all things in part and in an imperfect manner; which give assurance there shall be the whole, and that added which is perfect. What may be known of Gods future Promises and Threatnings is manifested in us, for God hath shewed it unto us from his Word, Works and our Nature which is capable of and hath a tendency to one, which is liable unto and abhors the other. For the first we are contented with all our Hearts, Hoping (as indeed it is true) that we may be translated from Imperfection to Perfection, from Vileness to Glory, from Misery unto Happiness. We are glad and thankful that it is so, but then there must be a rendring meet and the qualification of Obedience and Holiness. The greatness of the Reward doth abundantly stir up, for such an exceeding Good cannot be refused by any Man. None is so full and blessed already, but he may receive in of Heavenly good things. God hath given us *larger Faculties*, and made Earthly things *short and*
Isa. 28. 20. *empty*, so they do not satisfie at the very time; however all these things perish, and against the Man is taken away from them, seeing he shall remain elsewhere, he must likewise desire an Happiness which shall be with him then, as now he doth what is before him. That catching at every little good, the so greedily running after what vanishes almost as soon as had, doth shew that he desires also real good things which are exceeding Great and Eternal. Seeing Man must live for ever, he cannot do otherwise then desire to be Happy for ever; No more then whilst here for a short time he ceases desiring to pass through here as Comfortably

and

and Pleaſant as he may. If we could take away the deſires of Life and Happineſs, then we might find him that hath no mind to go to Heaven. As the Hungry craves after Food, the Covetous Riches, the Ambitious Honour, and every one Reſt and Satisfaction, and will uſe the common means in their own power towards the having of them: So there is a deſire ingrafted into Man after thoſe things God hath promiſed. And 'tis but reaſonable he ſhould do ſo much towards obtaining them, for otherwiſe he will come ſhort of them. They are ſet forth by the very ſame things in a greater degree then what is ſo earneſtly followed after here. Many will not ſeek after the things above through Negligence and Sloth, but every one will ſincerely deſire them hereafter when they ſhall be fully ſenſible of what they were ſo careleſs and indifferent. God ſaw how prone our Nature was to this, and hath ordered ſomething elſe to ſhake it off. Had any one need be puſhed forward to go and receive a Kingdom? Should there be ſo much intreaty uſed to ſave him from Danger and Miſery? When he knows thereof, the Man will run faſt enough of himſelf without uſing many Words.

Ariſe then, and eſcape for thy Life. Thy Breath is in thy Noſtrils, which alone keeps the Wicked Man from falling into Eternal and remedileſs Miſery. The reaſon why people are ſo fearleſs and unconcerned as to this, is becauſe they ſee it not; but if they did, they would be at their Wits end, and think they could never get far enough from ſo terrible a thing. If they believe this to be real and true, it is impoſſible they ſhould reſiſt the Force and Cogency thereof: For all Men are very Solicitous and wonderfully Careful to keep off a little Evil, whether national or private. Yea, the Wicked and Ungodly are afraid of a little Melancholy, Irkſomeneſs, Dulneſs, want of a little Pleaſure and the leaſt thing that would do hurt. They muſt likewiſe abhor and dread everlaſting Miſery, and there is the ſame reaſon they ſhould endeavour to avoid it. And though it be future, that will come: Many Years hence will as certainly be as the preſent Moment, unleſs all things are abſolutely deſtroyed, when they have already continued for ſome Thouſands of Years; And they will be no otherwiſe diſſolved then to make way for an Eternal and Irreverſible State, when things ſhall be more ſubſtantial and enduring. But themſelves endeavour to keep of future Evils as to preſerve

Health

Health and prevent Sickneſs, they provide againſt Want and Poverty or falling into Diſgrace. They take care how things ſhall be with their Children and Poſterity after their own deceaſe. So that compare one thing with another, the greatneſs of the concern, the utmoſt certainty that it will be one day preſent; for what is more ſure then Death the inlet thereto? Many things might be here urged that *muſt perſwade Men.*

And therefore they have two ways to fence themſelves by Unbelief or Unmindfulneſs. But both are pittiful and fooliſh ſhifts, for though we are not apt to believe ill things againſt our ſelves, and we have Temptation to think (becauſe we would have it ſo) that theſe are only *in terrorem*; Yet there is no ſecurity in this. Our reaſon tells us, things are fixed, and not according to our fancy: *If ſome diſbelieve, that ſhall not make the Decrees of God of none effect*; If we go about to prove this doth not make them for they were before, but only to make more known what we have from Scripture, to warn Sinners the more that they do not come into this place. It was the Saying of old at the delivery of their Meſſage, *The Prophets ſhall become Wind*, Jer. 5. 13. Which makes a whiſtling and noiſe for the time, but hurts no Body. But thoſe found after by woful Experience. *The Lord hath done that which he had deviſed, he hath fulfilled his VVord in the days of old, he hath thrown down and hath not pitied*, Lam. 2. 17. O, if they had gave heed and turned from their evil ways; but then it is too late. It ſhall be exactly ſo as to what is now ſaid of Reſurrection of the Dead, Eternal Judgment, and the after State. The event is to prove all things; but whoſo ſuſpends his Faith until then, his Condition will be without remedy. There are ſeveral Examples both in ſacred and common Hiſtory of thoſe who have fell into great Danger and ſudden Death, of which they were foretold, but they would not believe or not mind it: In ſuch a caſe Wiſdom dictates to what is ſafeſt; as there may be Danger, ſo it is better to undergo that little Trouble to prevent then to run the hazzard thereof. It is not ſo much their Deſtiny, as their Folly which draws them to the end, for the means of avoiding was in their power, and they might have uſed them. It was kindneſs in him that gave the notice, and ſome do take it and eſcape the like Evil; ſo it is as to the Threatnings of the Goſpel. They being future and in another World, cannot be certainly and indubitably

Gen. 19. 14. Exod. 9. 20, 21. Jer. 40. 15, 16.

bly known unto us; for a future and distant Affirmative may be proved by his Testimony who seeth all places and knoweth the things to come: Here we have the Word of God that these things are so; but yet the Serpents Question, *Gen.* 3. 1. will raise a doubt. Our Lord, who came to redeem us from that place, speaks thereof. There are also some reports of persons arising from the Dead, and giving witness to the same things, But he is greater then all, and their Testimony is not so much to be relied on. None did ever return from the Dead and say they were forged or false, from the silence of those Saints that arose at our Saviours Resurrection, or *Lazarus* who had been four days dead, nothing can be concluded; for possibly they were hindred from speaking, or might speak something which is not Recorded, that *our Faith should not stand in the Word of Men, but the Power of God*, by which they were then raised: Or if they knew nothing, this is no more to be wondred at, then he who Slumbers some few Minutes should know of the following day; Or if the Souls do not absolutely Sleep, yet they may be like those that Dream when they are first put into Futurity, knowing nothing but confusedly. There may be a slight Remembrance, but we cannot tell what to make of it. But what should they testifie, whereof we are not as much assured of already? The Decrees are yet to come and to be fulfilled, of Resurrection, Eternal Judgment, Perfect consummation of Bliss and Misery. That there is a place for separated Spirits we may understand as well as they, for this is the least part of the World where we live, and they must exist somewhere all one as we in this state of Conjunction and Mortality now do.

God will not shew it further then as he hath done already by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, *Christ* and the *Apostles* who have spoke out plainly what they did in general and signification. *And I will punish the World for their Evil*, Isa. 13. 11. Which is manifest he did not always in this place, and therefore would do it in another. *I have set before you Life and Death*, Deut. 30. 19. When as to the present it did happen alike to Righteous and Wicked, and therefore must be understood of Eternal Life and Death. Accordingly the *Jews* did gather from such kind of Expressions a future Happiness or Misery. The Evangelical Prophet comes a little further, to use his own Phrase, *With stammering Lips and another Tongue will he speak to this People*, Isa. 28. 11. He speaks

Joh. 5. 39. Mat. 22. 31, 32.

more clearly of Heaven and Hell, *Isa.* 66. 22. & Chap. 33. 14. then the others, but not so quite out neither, as those under the new Testament. Such hath been, and is the way of God's discovering himself by degrees to the World. *For the Kingdom is the Lords, and he is the Governour among the Nations*, Psal. 22. 28. It is for the Glory of the Great God, and the good of his Creatures, being Established upon proportionable Rewards and Punishments.

John 16. 25.

We are all Servants under him, though some are appointed to make known his Will to others, but themselves also are to obey it. And they are now to do the first only from what is revealed. So they speak what they have not received, who declare any thing more. It doth not become Servants to anticipate extraordinary Acts of their Masters Grace and Bounty, for those according to the Flesh would sooner retract their conceived Favours, when another shall put in mind and give notice of what they would have voluntary from themselves and unexpected of others. And therefore for my part, I dare not speak out what God knows are my desires and innermost thoughts, in submission to his Will, and consistent with his Glory and other Attributes: But as a fellow-Creature do intreat Men, that they would not commit those things against which God hath manifested his severe Displeasure. O that we may all behave our selves in the mean while, though we cannot deserve the least Mercy, yet to be in some measure *worthy to escape those things which we have been foretold of*; and then we must not Sin yet more against him. All the World may be assured, it was never yet seen in any Nation, Countrey or Language, for the Laws thereof to be Elusory or Vain, but due Punishment doth overtake those who are *Stubborn*, *Despisers* and *continued Offenders*. There are abundance of Expressions of Gods *Mercy* in Scripture, but they are commonly joyned with his *Truth*, or something else to keep of people from presuming too much upon it, as *Psal.* 57. 3, 10. & 62. 12. & 86. 5. & 100. 5. And that Gracious Manifestation *Exod.* 34. 5, 6. Where it is repeated many times that Mercy rejoyceth over Judgment, yet there comes in a limitation, *That will by no means clear the Guilty*. The Threatning is as firm and abiding as any part of his Word, and they are of Judgment when our Lord saith, *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away*, Mat. 24. 35. The Promise is *confirmed by two immutable things wherein it was impossible*

Ezek. 6. 10.

possible for God to lie, Heb. 6. 8. So of some *he hath sworn that they shall not enter into his Rest*, Heb. 3. 18. Both parts are ratified as much as can be. Known to God are his Decrees, and how he will be pleased to distribute to every one; but the safest way is for us to have Apprehension of them according to Truth, that we may be more careful to partake of his Favour and avoid his Wrath. Beware of those Doctrines which beget Presumption and Unconcernedness; for the things are true as God hath Established, if all the Learned in the World did argue or determine which way they would. It is better to do those things required, and avoid what is forbidden and so escape, then to follow after what ends in Death, to be unmindful or to dispute against it, for now several things happen which we did either not think, or say would not come. Though some would release or mitigate, yet they do not deny future Punishments, but if they were only as the more favourable conception of them allows, yet the Pain and Loss is much beyond the Pleasure or Conveniency of a short sinful Life; for what is that to countervail the *Romanists Purgatory*? or the opinion of a Thousand Years Torment, and then a final Dissolution? The seeming good though present can never be a sufficient exchange for such an evil and deprivation of Happiness, much less when the Torment is both Intolerable and Eternal. The Commands of God are enforced with the greatest Arguments that can be. And yet how few do regard them? How is the World grown to be so Wicked and Ungodly? And of those who come unto God, how few do conform unto his whole Will, Love and Serve him with all their Hearts? One would admire, unless he did consider the causes of so great Apostacy, *viz.* Mans Corruption, Unbelief, Ignorance, Deceits, Satans Temptations, there are many outward Objects to divert him, Carnal and Temporal things do make him forget those that are Spiritual and Eternal, which have a light and transient impression upon us, and such like. But all these hindrances may be taken away by the Grace and Revelation of God. It is so ordered that Man must strive and give Diligence if ever he would be Happy; there is enough left to prove him, and to exercise his Care and Watchfulness. Isa. 54. 10.

UPon the whole, There is a wise Establishment of things: There is a just Disposal, for assistance is given and the means are put in our power. The Members that have been yielded unto Sin The general Conclusion.

and Iniquity, may be made Members of Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs; the Faculties and Powers were firſt deſigned, and now may be reſtored unto good as they have been employed in evil. It is a gracious Diſpenſation in that God encourages to thoſe things which are for our Good and Happineſs. It is true, for we are only taken from deceit and falſhood, from ſhew and appearance which ends in what is worſe then nothing, and are called forth to what is true and aſſured, and real as any thing is: All that we now ſee is but the *Figure of the true*, even that Heaven and Earth which are to ſucceed. Hearken and come near O ye Sons of Men! do but Learn, Know and Practice the things pertaining to Gods Kingdom, for they are Juſt, Wiſe and Conceivable alſo, I want words to expreſs their excellency.

I have written the Great things of thy Law, but they were accounted as a ſtrange thing, Hoſ. 8. 12. The like Imputation may be here caſt upon what is brought out of the ſame Book of Scripture: Many odd paſſages, uncouth, They know not what to make of them. But let me tell any one that thinks ſo, where the *Strangeneſs* of all lieth. Even in *Mans Tranſgreſſion*; either the not obſervance of what is Commanded, or doing thoſe things which are contrary to the Laws of God and Truth. When there was occaſion to ſpeak of thoſe things, uncommon expreſſions might fall. The nature of things is the ſame, but differently apprehended, for ſome do live according to the Principles of Good and others do not, ſome uſe the means to have their firſt Blindneſs and Ignorance taken away, and others do not: But where is univerſal Obedience and alike Knowledge, what is Truth and ſutable to one, is likewiſe to another. Where it is half and imperfect, let him reflect upon that Duty or Sin which himſelf obſerves or avoids, and ſee how that is explained; by that he may meaſure whereof himſelf is Conſcious and Guilty. Had all continued alike Obedient as the Man after Gods own Heart, they would give the ſame Praiſe and Commendation of his Law as is done, *Pſal.* 119. but according to their ſeveral Sins Men think ſeverally as they will. Tis Luſt and Iniquity that corrupt the Judgement, or at leaſt the outward Faculty, from whence they think, ſpeak and do to vindicate themſelves before their Acquaintance, otherwiſe then they ſhould: But there is even in the Diſobedient (unleſs mightily defaced and ſuppreſſed) *the Spirit*

Prov. 8. 9.

That we might turn from our Iniquities, and underſtand thy Truth. *Dan.* 9. 13.

Spirit of the mind by which they can judge that *the Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, just and good, and they consent unto the Law that it is good*, Rom. 7. 12, 16. By that let them likewise examine what is here said to be inferred from it.

God knows, I have not intended to upbraid or accuse Mankind, but was obliged to manifest the Truth Impartially and Universally, as every one may judge in his own Conscience. There hath been nothing said but what is practicable. My self also am a Man compassed about with the same Sins and Infirmities, and do readily subscribe to what is written, *In many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 2. Neither have I spared mine own Sin, but in several places stand Convicted and Condemned out of the words I have set down, hoping to recover by Gods Mercy and my own Repentance; But what I desire for my self, so for others, to have the less Sin, for thereby is more Peace and Comfort according to the measure of Innocency and doing good there is a greater Reward. What real good doth come of any Disobedience? surely none, God is Dishonoured, and Man is not Benefited; it serves the design of an invisible Malicious Enemy, and therefore we should all abstain from Evil as much as we can.

Luke 2. 35. Mark 4. 22. 2Cor. 4. 2.

It is the open Accusation or secret Thought of the World to affix severally on them who come on this Message, *This Man seeketh not the welfare of this People, but the hurt*, Jer. 38. 4. If one had devised new Pleasure for the sensual minded, or had abundance to bestow Largesses on poor people, or gives them Entertainment for a few days with Mirth and Pastime; He that conquers Kingdoms and enlarges Territories, such are reputed great Instruments of Mens Happiness, though the utmost hereof is but *as the hasty Fruit before the Summer; which when he that looketh upon it, seeth it, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up*, Isa. 28. 4. which signifies nothing after it is had, and is but a faint fore-runner of the true Happiness; But they are only the unacceptable persons to the World, who speak of this, which shall just begin here on Earth, but never end and be consummated in Heaven. There cannot be too much Good-will returned to them who save from every least Injury, from Fire, Enemies, Sickness, Poverty, all which tend only to Temporal Death, but they are hated who would keep off from Eternal Death, from the Devil and his Legions, who would dissuade from vain things that cannot profit, and are the Baits he makes use of to beguil Souls unto himself: Even here

beloved

beloved Luſt and Intereſt have been touched upon and ſhewed that they cannot make a Man Happy, ſo that if the Temptation may not be taken away, yet is leſs tempting.

Why abundance have done thus much already; ſo many Books and Sermons to this purpoſe, what need of more? But there ſhould be yet further Admonition, for people are not as yet come over unto God. Whilſt others have hovered up and down in generals, I have ventured by Gods help to pitch; When others again have ſpent many words in Inſtruction of what was known before, or notional unneceſſary things, here hath attendance been principally given to the word of Exhortation. When ſome have uſed Moral Perſwaſions, or the leſs Cogent Arguments, here have been brought forth thoſe preſſed with the full force and power that I knew of; for curſed is that Deceiver who knoweth them, and doth not uſe them. And further, ſeveral things have been ſpoken out which were concealed from the people. If I had came with mine own Inventions and Fancies, or the power of Mans Wiſdom and Eloquence, there would be leſs ground of Hope; but the Truths have been preſſed in the Name of God from his Revelation. I thought my ſelf accountable for that meaſure of Grace he hath been pleaſed to ſend through me. And therefore let it be conſidered, that it is nothing to me, let all Men do what they will, they have ſtill their Liberty of Action; but they are to anſwer before God how they will ſhew themſelves towards his *Word* and *Truth*. If that is not found ſufficient to reclaim Sinners and Tranſgreſſors, it is becauſe they will not believe nor conſider thereof, however it will ariſe and Condemn them: What is here Publiſhed, will have its due effect on all that are Stubborn or Deſpiſers.

Iſa. 55. 10, 11.

John 12. 48.

Let not any one think this new found out, for it is the old Scripture-Way, illuſtrating that more particularly what is affirmed in divers places, *That I may ſee the good of thy Choſen, that I may Rejoyce in the gladneſs of thy Nation*, Pſal. 106. 5. *Happy art thou O* Iſrael, Deut. 33. 29. *Happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord*, Pſal. 144. 15. *He that keepeth the Law, Happy is he*, Prov. 29. 18. The end of all Preaching is to prove and ſhew that more perfectly what is contained therein, and ſo to manage it according to the deſign of the whole, that all the World may Obey God and be wiſe unto Salvation. His Word doth not ſtand in need of Apo-

logy,

logy, but the Abuſe and Corruption in handling thereof hath been ſo univerſal, that he who would keep free from it, is neceſſitated to Juſtifie himſelf leaſt he be thought *a ſetter forth of ſtrange Doctrines.*

To bring all towards Concluſion, Man would be Happy even whilſt he Lives and doth ſo that from the Decree of God, and the nature of the thing it is impoſſible he ſhould be Happy; And again, he declines thoſe things which are abſolutely neceſſary to be ſo. All his Actions turn upon this Point; If he would rectifie the miſtake, and ſuffer himſelf to be rightly informed herein, he can never miſs of (what all deſire) the only end, the true Happineſs. If he is put in mind of any thing which may aſſiſt or direct him, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give Glory, for thy Mercy and for thy Truths ſake,* Pſal. 115. 1.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 4 line 2 for *varietatiẽ* r *variation*. l 40 r *Mark* 14. p 26 l 7 r *not me ourselves*. p 37 l 35 r *to recommend*. p 47 l 34 f *forwardness* r *frowardness*. p 50 l 19 f *speaking* r *sneaking* p 70 l 37 f *fear* r *bear*. p 71 l 21 r *equal worth*. p 75 l 20 r *John* 6. 13. p 79 l 1 omit the word *first*. p 86 l 5 r *their own peril*. p 180 l 13 r *doth not*. p. 190 l 16 r *adapting*. p 229 l 9. r *trust God*. p 261 l 6 r *lively and*. p 309 l 8 r *enjoyment*. p 358 l 22 f *employments* r *enjoyments*. p 417 l 16 r *procuring*. p 467 l 29 r *to have been Penned*. p 152 l 27 r *before Men can*.

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